CAROLINE

OF

LICHTFIELD.

BRITISH MUSEUM
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APR

CAROLINE

OF

LICHTFIELD;

A NOVEL.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH

By THOMAS HOLCROFT.

SECOND EDITION.

IN TWO VOLUMES.
VOL. II.

Idole d'un cœur juſte, & paſſion du Sage,
Amitié, que ton nom ſoutienne cet ouvrage ;
Règne dans mes écrits, ainſi que dans mon cœur,
Tu m'appris à connoître, à ſentir, le bonheur.

VOLTAIRE.

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1797.

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CAROLINE

OF

LICHTFIELD.

LEAVE we, for a time, the lovely Caroline to reflect, weep over, and alternately read the manuſcript of Lindorf and the letters of Walſtein; and let us ſee what became of the two friends. Indeed, the profound ſolitude of Caroline, the monotony of her preſent life, and the ſtruggles of her heart, would but weary the reader. Not that it was dulneſs by which ſhe was tormented; no, it was a ſtate of continual agitation; the leaſt noiſe ſhe heard made her whole frame tremble and her blood run cold. Her imagination, inceſſantly employed on Lindorf and the Count, perſuaded her that one of the two would ar-

rive at Rindaw. What! might ſhe think that Lindorf, who had baniſhed himſelf for ever from her preſence, would return? No: when ſhe reaſoned with herſelf, read his manuſcript, and recollected the obligations he was under to Walſtein, ſhe would exclaim, with conviction, Never, never ſhall I ſee him more. But love and imagination do not always reaſon; and, unconſcious of it herſelf, perhaps ſhe thought, more than once, he would not have the fortiude to keep his reſolution.

She was deceived. At the farther part of Sileſia, in his melancholy manſion of Ronebourg, Lindorf repented of his involuntary crime with tears and groans, and thought the expiation of a life ſcarcely ſufficient atonement. Alas! how often was he tempted to terminate that life he no longer could conſecrate to Caroline, and which had hither to been ſo fatal to the beſt of friends! But he knew them both too well not to be certain that ſuch an act would for ever deſtroy their happineſs and tranquillity. He read the Sorrows of Werter, but they produced a very different effect to what might have been expected. The deſpair of Charlotte, of Albert, the friend of Werter, were terrible; and, more generous than the latter,

Lindorf would rather live and ſuffer, than empoiſon the felicity of thoſe he loved.

During the firſt part of his reſidence at Ronebourg, life was become ſo odious to him, and the pain of ſupporting it appeared ſo great, that he thought thus, by enduring this pain, to make ſome reparation for his wrongs, which idea was his only conſolation. We muſt likewiſe obſerve if his paſſions were violent they were the leſs likely to be eternal. Notwithſtanding his ſubtle diſtinction concerning the different ſpecies of love, he had adored Louiſa; and, though he had not the ſame extreme paſſion for Matilda, yet, had ſhe certainly, began to make a conſiderable impreſſion on his heart, when ſhe was carried off. We have ſince ſeen to what exceſs he loved Caroline; hope we then that time, or ſome other paſſion, may cure him of this unfortunate love. His heart is too honeſt, his affection for Walſtein too ſincere, to make him endeavour to cheriſh ſentiments he knows to be criminal.

He had been a recluſe, more than a month, at Ronebourg, and his cure was not very far advanced, when, one day, attempting, a ſecond time, to write to the Count, without well knowing what to ſay, he beheld the Count himſelf, enter his chamber,

and run into his arms. Surpriſed, at his arrival from Peterſburgh, not to find Lindorf at Berlin, and learning from the ſervants he had left there, he was gone to Ronebourg, where he was alone; Walſtein, who dreaded ſome unexpected misfortune, waited only to pay his duty to the King and his good father-in-law, the High Chamberlain, and immediately departed to learn what might be the motives of this his ſingular retreat, at the very moment he ſuppoſed him in the full enjoyment of happineſs. No ſooner were the firſt tranſports of ſurpriſe, emotion, and joy over, than the Count began his interrogations. They were dictated by the fears and affections of friendſhip. "Tell me, inſtantly, dear Lindorf," ſaid he, "wherefore do I find you here, alone, melancholy, with ſome ſecret malady at your heart, which your countenance but too plainly betrays? Unfold the cruel myſtery, my friend. What is become of the lady you loved? Why is ſhe not with you? Why not united to you? Wherefore is not my friend happy?"

The Count might have continued ſpeaking; for Lindorf, ignorant of his coming, unprepared to anſwer queſtions ſo terrible as theſe, kept a mournful ſilence. Walſtein

ſtein was ſilent alſo; but he preſſed the hand of Lindorf, while his countenance, expreſſive of the feelings of his heart, ſeemed to demand his confidence. At length, "What!" ſaid he, "Lindorf, will you not tell me? Am I no longer your friend; the faithful guardian of your boſom ſecrets, and have I not a right to read what paſſes there?"

"Yes, yes," cried Lindorf, "you have every imaginable right over me; you are my friend, the beſt of friends, and never did I feel it more powerfully than at this moment, in which I am obliged to refuſe you what you aſk." The Count, amazed, fell back ſome paces. Lindorf continued, "Oh! my dear Walſtein, recoil not from your unhappy friend, condemn him not too lightly. Silence is not my choice, but the effect of abſolute neceſſity; and, did you know, you muſt approve my motives. Reſtrained by honour, oaths, every thing moſt ſacred, I may not betray a ſecret which regards not me alone. Aſk no more concerning this unfortunate affair, but pity him who is deprived of the melancholy reſource of dividing his griefs."

The Count again went up to Lindorf, again took him by the hand, and his looks proved how much he was affected. "Re-

ſtrained by honour and oaths!" ſaid he; "my queſtions, then, all are ended; too well, myſelf, I know how far a ſecret promiſe is obligatory, and I am anſwered--Yet, is the misfortune without a remedy? Have you no hope?"

"None, none," replied Lindorf, with vehemence. "I have for ever loſt her whom I adored; ſhe exiſts no more"——Lindorf ſtopped; he was going to have added, *for me*, but was fearful of ſaying too much, and the Count exclaimed, "Good God! Lindorf, exiſts no more! What, has death deprived you of her? Ah! dear and unfortunate Lindorf, how infinitely do I pity you!"

Lindorf wiſhed to undeceive him, yet his fears again kept him ſilent; he dreaded leſt Walſtein ſhould divine the truth, and, on conſideration, was not ſorry he had thus miſunderſtood him. His ſilence, therefore, confirmed this idea of death, and would deſtroy every ſuppoſition that might have alighted on Caroline. Walſtein, however, had none: never had it entered his thoughts that his own wife was the woman ſo much beloved, ſo much regretted. He had been abſent from Pruſſia, was equally ignorant of the ſituation of Rindaw, where he had never been, and of Riſberg; nor did he even know that Lindorf had lived there, or

there had formed the connection ſo fatal to his repoſe. He knew, likewiſe, Caroline was living, and well, and remained perſuaded that ſome tragical event had robbed Lindorf's miſtreſs of life. The gloomy deſpair in which the latter remained, after this converſation, confirmed the idea. Walſtein endeavoured to calm and conſole him, and aſked if he would not return with him to Berlin.

"To Berlin!" cried Lindorf, with terror; "No, no, dear Walſtein, never, never. —I muſt quit this country; I muſt travel for ſome years: oppoſe not a reſolution abſolutely neceſſary and fixed. On your friendſhip I depend to obtain permiſſion, and the concluſion of peace makes me hope it will not be difficult to obtain. Should the King refuſe, I muſt reſign my commiſſion; I muſt depart, I muſt leave this country."

Ignorant of his real motives, the Count judged he had very urgent reaſons for quitting Pruſſia, and was the leſs ready to ſearch for objections, becauſe he thought a few years travelling might remove his anguiſh. He, therefore, promiſed to obtain the leave he deſired; and, a few minutes after, added, "It is very poſſible, dear Lindorf, I may go with you."——You, Walſtein?"——

"Yes, I, my friend; I, as well as you, perhaps, may have reaſons for wiſhing to quit my country. We will go together, and we ſhall be leſs unhappy."

"Unhappy!" cried Lindorf; "may you, may the Count of Walſtein, ſpeak of unhappineſs!"

"I underſtand your ſurpriſe," ſaid the Count, drawing nearer, "but it is time it ſhould end; time it is that I ſhould reveal a ſecret I have too long kept hidden. Can I, Lindorf, blame you for myſterious conduct, when you ſhall know that I have been married theſe ſix months?"

Lindorf affected not ſurpriſe; it was impoſſible, on ſuch an occaſion eſpecially, to feign what he did not feel; but his embarraſſment, the red fluſhings of his countenance, and his real ſenſations, there ſo marked, gave him the appearance of ſurpriſe. The Count continued.

"Yes, my friend, I am united to the moſt angelic of women; and yet am I far from being happy! I will relate all my mournful ſtory; at preſent it will be ſome conſolation, and may I bring that conviction home to you which I myſelf begin to experience; that in friendſhip, only, man ought to ſeek felicity."

Then

Then did the Count enter on a narrative, bitter to the ſoul of Lindorf, which he had foreſeen, and which, of all tortures, he moſt had dreaded. The recital confirmed his miſfortunes, his remorſe, and lacerated his heart. What muſt be the impreſſion, on that agitated heart, of the name of Caroline, repeated every inſtant; a name ſo deeply engraven there, and of which he was obliged to diſſemble ignorance? Surely, if Lindorf had been guilty of involuntary wrongs, to this the moſt worthy of men, what he now ſuffered was ſufficient to expiate all his errors. The Count began his narrative far back; told Lindorf it was the King, who, knowing the rich inheritance of Caroline, firſt projected this marriage, and had written to him concerning it while in Ruſſia. "The motive." ſaid Walſtein, "and even the will of my Sovereign, who was very warm on the ſubject, leſs influenced me than the age and the kind of education of the young lady."

"Caroline of Lichtfield, ſtill very young, having lived recluſe in the country, and never ſeen any man who had made an impreſſion on her heart, ſeemed exactly the woman I had ſo long deſired. You know my ſyſtem was founded on an ignorance

of the world, and of love. I certainly ſhall find means, ſaid I, to allure and attach this young heart; if not by love, at leaſt, by friendſhip ſo powerful, and gratitude ſo tender, that they may well ſupply the want of this paſſion. Firſt appearances will be againſt me; but ſucceeding trials and better acquaintance will aſcertain our mutual happineſs. Full of this dear, this flattering idea, I anſwered the King with rapture, aſſuring him I ſhould eſteem myſelf too happy, might I but obtain the hand of the young Baroneſs of Lichtfield. His Majeſty delayed not to reply that he had obtained the promiſe of the High Chamberlain, and commanded me to return, immediately, and conclude the marriage.

"I began my journey, but was obliged to remain at Dantzic, ill of a violent fever, which brought me to the brink of the grave; while you, dear Lindorf, were then fulfilling the firſt and moſt ſacred of duties to an expiring parent. It was two months before I was well enough to continue my journey. I arrived at Berlin, and had the diſappointment to find you were not there. I heard alſo, with anxiety, that my young bride had paſſed the two months of my illneſs at court. Ah! how many impediments

ments might theſe two dreadful months have thrown in the way of happineſs! How might they have deranged my whole plan! I ſtrove not to conceal my fears from my ſovereign, who conſoled me with his uſual goodneſs: He had often, himſelf, obſerved Caroline, and had always found the ſame air of innocence, and cheerful ſprightlineſs, which ſhewed the heart to be at eaſe. "At leaving her retreat, I gave ſufficient intimation," added he, "of what my intentions were, purpoſely to keep all our young courtiers at a reſpectful diſtance; and, though your bride is an angelic young lady, not one of them have attempted to pay her the leaſt attention, more than politeneſs required; and Caroline, herſelf, without diſtinguiſhing one man above another, has ſought her own amuſement only." The ſame evening I was introduced to the Baron of Lichtfield, my future father, and, on the morrow, to the lovely Caroline."

Here the Count related the manner of his firſt viſit, which we have before circumſtantially deſcribed; the averſion of Caroline, which ſhe could not diſſemble; and confeſſed that, no doubt, it would then have been more generous, more delicate, to have abandoned his intents, and that he

even had thought ſo to have done; "but," added Walſtein, "it is eaſy to delude one's ſelf. Imagine, my friend, that this very flight, this emotion, ſo natural, ſo open, ſo unrepreſſed, which ought perhaps to have terrified, gave me, on the contrary, great pleaſure; and, on full reflection, made me more ardent to obtain her. In them I thought I beheld indubitable proof of that candour, that innocence of early youth, which I had feared leſt her reſidence at court might have tainted. Had ſhe been more artful ſhe would certainly have better concealed this firſt ſenſation of terror, and I inwardly thanked her for flying me thus. The moment I beheld her, the moment ſhe entered, led by her father, her ingenuous, open, and beautiful countenance, and the graces that were in every motion, and in all her form, made their full impreſſion. She was exactly the perſon whom, had I the beauties of the world aſſembled, I ſhould alone have ſelected."

"If I did not abſolutely believe that I no way contributed to the ſudden fear and flight of Caroline, it was not the fault of the High Chamberlain. I liſtened, however, with pleaſure, to his proteſtations; and particularly, when he declared, on his word

word and honour, ſhe had, that very morning, aſſured him her heart was free, and that ſhe was very willing to be mine. "I have laid no conſtraint on her," ſaid he, and confirmed it with an oath; "and to-morrow, if her health permit, ſhe herſelf will tell you ſo."

"Alas! my friend, how readily does the heart believe what it ardently deſires! I departed, almoſt convinced; and the morrow, and the future morrows, confirmed the illuſion. I obſerved the young lady; ſhe appeared exceedingly timid, but ſhewed not the leaſt repugnance. Our marriage was fixed, by the King, for that day week, and ſhe conſented without aſking any delay; nay, once, when delay was mentioned, ſhe begged it might not take place. (The reader will no doubt here recollect the artifice of the High Chamberlain, and the fears of Caroline for her father's life.) I ſhould have employed the intermediate time in endeavouring to gain her confidence and friendſhip; but, during the few viſits I made, the Baron ſuppoſed etiquette required he ſhould not leave us alone. (Here Walſtein likewiſe miſtook the High Chamberlain's motives.) She ſpoke little; but

but that little had meaning, and was well timed, and diſcovered a mind that made me more and more enraptured with her, till I imagined myſelf the moſt fortunate of men.

" The evening before the ceremony was to be performed, I thought, however, I perceived marks of grief on her lovely countenance. Her eyes were red, her heart ſeemed heavy, and one might ſee ſhe endeavoured to ſtifle her feelings. I was much affected at obſerving this, and, ſeizing the opportunity of a moment when we were unobſerved, I, tenderly approaching her, ſaid, " Beauteous Caroline, am I any way the cauſe of grief to you? Is it in my power, by any means, to give you eaſe?" She, timidly, looked down, and was ſilent. At laſt ſhe ſoftly anſwered, " An engagement for life will occaſion fears; but I believe you, Sir, to be good and generous, and that hope cheers me: on you, alone, my happineſs will depend."

" I knew not how to interpret the manner in which ſhe ſaid this, and was going to reply, but her father came up; ſhe then aſſumed her natural tone and manner, and ſeemed no longer to dread the approaching moment. How, then, was it poſſible I

ſhould

ſhould divine her meaning; or preſage the dreadful ſtroke that awaited me?"

The Count, then, relating all that had paſſed on the day of the marriage, took from his pocket-book the letter which Caroline had given him, and which has before been read. "Here, my friend," ſaid he, to Lindorf, "take this; read, and ſee the dreadful reverſe; behold the fearful traits of the fallen thunderbolt."

Lindorf had occaſion for all his fortitude. With a trembling hand, and with vague and abſent eyes, he took and run over lines traced by her he adored, in language moſt affecting, natural and eloquent. He would have ſaid ſomething to the Count, as he returned it, but could not articulate a word. He flung himſelf into the arms of Walſtein, preſſed him to his boſom, and a tear, he could no longer detain, fell down his cheek.

Had the Count had the leaſt ſuſpicion of the truth, this exceſſive emotion might well have given it confirmation; but none he had, for none he ſought; his heart was a ſanctuary too holy for a gueſt ſo vile, and he beheld nothing but ſympathetic ſenſibility, heightened. perhaps, by ſympathy of ſituation.

"Dear Lindorf," ſaid he, when he was a little

a little calm, "you feel too ſtrongly the diſtreſs of your friend; and I even fear I have unconſciouſly torn the bandage from your own wound. Some explanation, ſome ſtroke equally afflicting you may have ſuſtained.—I ſee—I ſee I ought to have been ſilent, ought ſtill to have concealed this fatal ſecret; your own pangs are ſufficient, and I did you injuſtice when I ſuppoſed mine might afford you conſolation. I perceive, on the contrary, they do but aggravate—Pardon, pardon, dear Lindorf. This proof of thy friendſhip, this too ſtrong ſenſibility of what my feelings are, penetrate me to the very heart."

"O Walſtein, Walſtein," exclaimed Lindorf; and, ſinking under the oppreſſive weight of remorſe, hid his face with both his his hands. He was going inſtantly to have diſcovered the real cauſe of this his emotion, but he remembered Caroline, and the oath he had made never to reveal what might, to her, have conſequences ſo fatal; this, the firſt of duties, ſuddenly was recollected, and this ſtopped him ſhort.

The Count, ſeeing him ſo deeply affected, wiſhed to change the ſubject. His feelings, ever delicate, were ever averſe to give others pain.—"Come, come, my friend,"

friend." ſaid he, "let us take a walk in your park, and we will ſpeak on theſe matters another time." Accordingly, they went out together, and the Count diſcourſed on the country and the Court he had ſo lately left, and entered into the moſt intereſting and curious diſcuſſions; for his genius, naturally penetrating and obſerving, his rank, and the flattering diſtinctions paid him by the Empreſs, who highly reſpected him, gave him the power and the means of ſeeing and of judging.

This converſation, which Walſtein prolonged, and gave all the animation to in his power, purpoſely that Lindorf might recover himſelf, had the effect intended; he inſenſibly became calm, and afterwards highly delighted. No perſon had the art of captivating the ear and underſtanding like the Count of Walſtein; his mild and perſuaſive eloquence, the tone of his voice, which ſpoke to the heart, and his happy choice of words, rendered his converſation inexpreſſibly ſweet and agreeable: great knowledge, without pedantry or ſeeming conſciouſneſs that he poſſeſſed it, happy expreſſions, perſpicuity, and connection in all he ſaid, and that kind of honeſt inſinuation which adapts itſelf to, and draws forth

forth, the powers of others, rendered him, indeed, a moſt amiable, as well as a moſt inſtructive companion. No perſon could be in his company without having learnt ſomething, nor without being exceedingly well ſatisfied with himſelf. Since his marriage, the Count had loſt much of the gaiety of early youth, which even his accident had not before robbed him of; but it was replaced by a ſtrong imagination, an energetic fire, which appertained to him only, and which could only by hearing him be perfectly conceived. While he ſpoke no auditor remembered his perſon, and, more than once, at Peterſburg, it was his fault that the ladies did not entirely forget it. Let us add, now we are on the ſubject, that his perſon, ſo ill-treated, was ſo much improved that Lindorf himſelf was ſurpriſed, and Caroline, who had ſeen him after a two months illneſs, would have been ſtill more ſo, had ſhe beheld him now. His hair, which had come off after the fever, had grown again in abundance, was of a fine colour, and well diſpoſed. The ſcar on his face, greatly filled up, was ſcarely apparent; he was no longer meagre, but had an appearance of youth and health, very different from the yellow

and

and livid tints his malady had left, at the time of his marriage: a bit of green ſilk, and a ribband, properly diſpoſed, removed that diſguſt which the loſs of an eye might, at firſt ſight, have cauſed; and a little attention to himſelf had conſiderably corrected his habit of ſtooping; ſo that his ſhape ſeemed remarkable only by an eaſy and negligent attitude, much preferable to upright formality. It is true, he ſtill limped, but he was oftener ſeated than walking; hence we may well imagine, that with exceeding fine teeth, and infinite expreſſion in his countenance, the Count of Walſtein, then little above thirty, was not much an object of averſion. Had he been the ſame ſome months ſooner, Caroline would not have fled, her letter would not have been written, nor would this hiſtory have exiſted. Every thing therefore is right; let us return to our two friends.

Their walk continued till duſk, and Lindorf, highly pleaſed with the company of his friend, and faſcinated by his converſation, preſently recovered himſelf perfectly. Impatient to know what were the reſolutions of Walſtein reſpecting Caroline, he intreated him to finiſh his hiſtory. "It is finiſhed," anſwered the Count; "things remain

remain juſt as they were. You know me too well, dear Lindorf, to imagine I ſhould refuſe a requeſt made in terms ſo ſtrong, ſo affecting, and even ſo reaſonable, as was that of Caroline. I obtained, but not without ſome trouble, permiſſion for her to return and live at Rindaw, with the friend by whom ſhe had been educated. The King, not very well pleaſed, I ſuppoſe, that a match of his making ſhould have this kind of concluſion, exacted the moſt profound ſecrecy.—

"But ought not I to have been an exception?" ſaid Lindorf, ſuddenly interrupting the Count—"Have I not cauſe, my friend, to reproach you for this ſecrecy? What! conceal the moſt intereſting event of your whole life from me!"

"I own it was wrong, dear Lindorf, and often have I reproached myſelf; but the King had commanded, and both my duties and obligations have given me the habit of paying the moſt ſcrupulous attention to his orders: yet, had we met, I ſhould certainly have told you; but the fear of a letter miſcarrying, and the conviction that my diſtreſs would have grieved you, were additional motives to ſecrecy; and, in fact, my friend, by your preſent feelings, I find it

it is happy you were not acquainted with it ſooner."

Lindorf made no reply, though he felt the exact contrary moſt forcibly; but he did not expect what was coming.

"Yes, my friend," added the Count, ſmiling, "you have youth and ſenſibility, and the Counteſs of Walſtein is an angel; you would have aſked permiſſion to viſit her, nay, I myſelf ſhould have requeſted you ſo to do; you have ſince been in love, but your heart, then, was free, and might have been put to trial ſo ſevere that I cannot but be happy to think you have eſcaped it. I own your ſufferings from love may be the ſame; but what, Lindorf, would have been the exceſs of that wretchedneſs, had the object of that love been the wife of your friend? Nay, even Caroline herſelf would have been too much expoſed to danger. I own my dear Lindorf," ſaid Walſtein, tapping him on the ſhoulder, "though I love you as a friend, I ſhould fear you as a rival."

Poor Lindorf!—Happily it was twilight, and in a dark room; nay, perhaps, Lindorf had choſen this ſituation and hour, purpoſely, to renew the converſation. As ſoon as he could recover his ſpeech, "I hope," ſaid

ſaid he, "Walſtein does not think, cannot imagine, I ever might be his rival. I hope he will do me the juſtice to believe, that the title of his wife would be pledge ſufficient for my faith."

"Yes, if any faith might be kept with youth, grace, wit, and beauty," replied the Count. "But do not underſtand that ſeriouſly, dear Lindorf, which is not ſeriouſly meant; and which I ſhould not have ſaid, had there really been any danger.—At preſent you are but too much out of the power of love; beſides, you are not likely to ſee the Counteſs; nay, perhaps, even I myſelf."———

"You yourſelf!"

"Dear Lindorf, I know not how to act. Perhaps the impediments I have found may heighten ſenſations which a week's acquaintance ought not to have rendered very paſſionate; yet do they unceaſingly aſſault me. I more than ever feel my happineſs depends on living with Caroline, for Caroline, and by Caroline to be beloved, as much as a man like me may be beloved; yet never had I leſs hope of attaining theſe my ſo ardent deſires."

Lindorf liſtened with downcaſt eyes. "She ſtill remains at Rindaw," added the Count,

Count, "which, ſince our ſeparation, ſhe has never left; there living in a moſt profound retreat, unſeeing and unſeen, and debarred of all the pleaſures ſhe has every right to enjoy, and which her ſhort ſtay at court, may, moſt probably have taught her to regret. Indeed, I have been told ſhe ſeemed exceedingly fond of dancing; yet, might it be believed, all theſe pleaſures, theſe wiſhes ſo natural at ſixteen, have been leſs powerful with her than the dreadful antipathy ſhe has conceived to me! This has given her force and fortitude incredible, and Caroline, with pleaſure, buries her youth and her charms in ſolitude, to avoid living with a huſband ſhe hates!"

The generous, the philoſophic, the capacious heart of Walſtein himſelf, ſcarcely, could contain its ſorrows. While thus he ſpoke, the deep and lengthened ſigh heaved in his boſom, and ſilently eſcaped, while the tear was with difficulty detained and repelled.

"Have you heard of her ſince your return?" ſaid Lindorf, in a low voice. "Are you certain ſhe perſiſts in this unjuſt ſepaparation?"

"Too certain," replied the Count, ſeeking among the papers of his pocket-book.

"Here

"Here is a letter from her to her father; he has lately received, and ſent it incloſed to me. You there will find ſhe declares her determination to continue at Rindaw, and *that her heart and her reaſon ſtill revolt at the ties ſhe has formed.*"

Lindorf took the letter, read it as he had read the preceding one; but remarked the date, ſaw it had been written the very day on which he wrote the manuſcript, ſighed with bitterneſs of ſpirit, and gave it back.

"The High Chamberlain" continued the Count, "has ſaid, in his letter, that he had written ſuch an anſwer as became him. The phraſe made me tremble; for his anſwer, no doubt, was harſh and deſpotic. Caroline, perhaps at this inſtant, drowned in tears, accuſes me, anew, of tyranny, and her hatred increaſes. My only happineſs, is that this her hatred is not cauſed by a paſſion for any other man.—Oh, Lindorf! ſpeak, aid, guide me; tell me how I ought to act in a ſituation ſo delicate; from you I hope ſalutary advice."——"Advice," ſaid Lindorf, heſitating. "Walſtein ought to take advice only of his own heart."—"I underſtand thee, my friend," ſaid the Count, "and my heart, already, has dictated what it becomes me to do."

What

What this was we ſhall know, hereafter; at preſent, leave we Lindorf to breathe, who had ſufficiently ſuffered during this painful converſation; leave we the Count to recover from the fatigues of his journey, and let us return to Caroline.

The terrible anſwer of her father ſhe had received. Not only did he permit, but he commanded, her to inform the Canoneſs of her marriage; and prepare, immediately, to quit her and to return to inhabit Walſtein houſe. "Too long," ſaid he "has "this obliging huſband allowed you to in- "dulge a whim which his abſence only "could make me tolerate; 'tis time it "ſhould end. The Count is come back, "and does not chuſe to be deprived of his "wife; he claims his rights, and, for my "part, be certain you ſhall for ever remain "deprived of thoſe you have to my affec- "tion, and likewiſe to my wealth, if you "make the leaſt difficulty about returning. "Expect no one to ſupport you: I ſpeak "in the name of a King, a Huſband, and "Father equally angered by your long and "obſtinate diſobedience."

This was not true; he High Chamberlain acted on his own authority, and had neither received the command or the advice

of any perſon for this fulminating letter; but he wiſhed to try if he might not obtain from terror an effect which kindneſs, reaſon, and retirement had not produced. He was, beſide, outrageous at this unforeſeen perſeverance of his daughter. A witneſs of the honours the Count received, at returning from his embaſſy, of the friendſhip the King had ſo openly teſtified for him, and of the high and unrivalled favour he enjoyed, he impatiently burned to proclaim Walſtein his ſon, and participate his glory. It was during a fit of this counteracted paſſion that he had written to his daughter; but Caroline, not ſuſpecting it was poſſible to alter or diſguiſe the truth, underſtood all he wrote literally: the anger of the King afflicted her, and that of her ſpouſe, eſpecially, becauſe ſhe ſaw not the generous Walſtein, whom the manuſcript and letters of Lindorf had ſhewn her in this tyranny; and whom, from being obliged to admire, ſhe began a little to love. But this ſenſation gave place to fear and diſlike, the moment ſhe thought it poſſible he ſhould abuſe his power.

"Alas!" ſaid ſhe, while again ſhe read his letters to Lindorf, and opened the box to look at his picture, which ſhe as ſuddenly ſhut again in diſpleaſure, "alas! his cha-

racter is changed as much as his perſon. If he be already ſo much irritated at this my reſiſtance, what will he become when he ſhall learn the fatal ſecret of my heart, and that it has yielded wholly to his friend? Of this he cannot long remain ignorant, nor can he but know I love when he ſhall be told I am acquainted with Lindorf."

Deſpair redoubled at the thought. The ſuppoſition of living with a huſband already prejudiced againſt her, perhaps jealous, and undoubtedly deſpotic, ſince he had commanded her to return, was revolting. She no longer felt herſelf obliged to his condeſcenſion for ſuffering her to depart, and conſenting that ſhe ſhould remain at Rindaw all the time he was abſent; "he was, no doubt glad I might there remain ſhut up while he was at Peterſburg; and proves, but too incontrovertibly, delicacy and mild complaiſance were not his motives.—Ah! Lindorf, friendſhip deceives you; the Count of Walſtein poſſeſſes not thoſe virtues you imagine."

To all this anguiſh was added that of having to relate her ſtory to the Canoneſs. As often as ſhe endeavoured to ſpeak expreſſion expired on her lips; never could ſhe determine ſo to afflict that tender and

unfortunate friend, ſo at once to excite her anger and her grief, by informing her of the ſecret ſhe ſo long had kept from her, and of the approaching departure of her dear pupil. The loſs of her ſight had rendered the company of Caroline her ſole conſolation; and often did ſhe repeat that the moment ſhe was deprived of that would be the moment of her death; wherefore the idea of being obliged to quit her, added increaſe of pangs to the affectionate Caroline; nor could ſhe reſolve to plunge the poignard to her heart by ſpeaking of this dreadful ſeparation, though ſhe thought it inevitable. Yet did ſhe hope it might for a time, be deferred. Her father had fixed no day; he only had commanded her to hold herſelf ready againſt he ſhould come to take her away; accompanied, no doubt, by Walſtein, her formidable huſband.

To them ſhe left the office of informing the Canoneſs, and daily waited their coming, in trances of deſpair; having no other hope but that of dying in the arms of her dear Mamma, with grief of being thus torn from her. In this inquietude, this continual agitation, was ſhe, which conſiderably affected her health, when ſhe one day received a letter. The hand writing and the arms on the

the ſeal were inſtantly recollected, and cauſed an emotion, a contraction of the heart, which ſcarcely can be imagined. It was from the Count himſelf. She trembled as ſhe opened it; and was near fainting when ſhe ſaw at the top, it was dated from the caſtle of Ronebourg, the manſion of Lindorf.——"Merciful God! He is with Lindorf!"—Caroline was obliged to pauſe awhile, and collect all her fortitude, ere ſhe could read what folllows.

From the Count of WALSTEIN *to* CAROLINE.

At the Caſtle of Ronebourg, belonging to the Baron of Lindorf, Oct. 17, 17—

"SHOULD I be ſo unfortunate as that the "receipt of this letter might occaſion any "ſenſation of apprehenſion, or dread, let "me conjure her to whom it is addreſſed "to diſpel all ſuch feelings; kindly to "read, and firmly to believe, that he who "wrote it would rather periſh than give "her heart the ſlighteſt pang.

"Yes, Madam, for, alas! I dare not "call you by a name more tender; think "me, what I am, your friend; at leaſt "what I wiſh to be; and, as a tender

" friend, permit me thus, a moment, to
" converſe with you, on that which, of all
" things in the world, I have moſt at heart,
" the happineſs of Caroline; nothing is
" there I will not do, may I but hope to con-
" tribute to this happineſs. Deign to give
" me your commands; think not of my
" eaſe, for willingly will I ſuffer, and my
" ſufferings ſhall even become my plea-
" ſures, ſo, Madam, that they may be but
" for your ſake.

" The Baron, your father, no doubt, has
" written to you. What the contents of
" his letter may be I know not; but, be
" they what they may, ſhould they impoſe
" the leaſt conſtraint on Caroline they belie
" the heart of Walſtein. No, Madam, you
" are free; abſolute miſtreſs of your own
" deſtiny and of mine. For me, ſuffer me
" here to leave the deciſion of what I ſhall
" hereafter become to yourſelf; for here I
" ſolemnly vow to ſubmit to the ſentence
" you ſhall pronounce. Yet, how can I
" entertain the moſt momentary hope?
" Have I not, now before my eyes, the let-
" ter in which you have declared, to your
" father, your heart is ſtill the ſame; that
" your unfortunate huſband is ſtill the ob-
" ject of worſe than diſlike, and that your

" ſole

" ſole wiſh is to live ſeparate from him?
" Alas!——But be it ſo, Caroline; you
" ſhall be obeyed: your wiſhes to me are
" laws; beforetime I was too eager to gra-
" tify my own, and thus have fettered you
" for life. Myſelf I ought to puniſh, and
" endeavour to merit both your eſteem and
" gratitude by abſenting myſelf ſo long as
" you ſhall pleaſe ſo to ordain.

" No, Caroline, you ſhall not be doomed
" to live ſequeſtered, me to avoid. The
" Court ſhall not be deprived of its brighteſt
" ornament, nor your father of a daughter
" who of all his honours is the higheſt.
" Return to this father, enjoy thoſe inno-
" cent pleaſures which you ſo well are
" formed to enjoy; nor fear to have them
" empoiſoned by my preſence. My reſo-
" lution is fixed. I am here with a friend,
" whom an unhappy paſſion obliges to
" travel, for ſome years, and I am deter-
" mined to travel with him, my company
" will alleviate his ſufferings, and my own
" will be relieved by the ſweet hope that
" you are more happy, your heart more at
" eaſe, and that I am repairing, as far as
" repair I can, all the wrongs I have done
" you. To you, Madam, I leave the choice
" of the name you ſhall bear; if mine be

" odious, if you ſtill would wiſh the world
" ſhould call you Caroline of Lichtfield,
" and if you would rather reſide with your
" father, I can eaſily obtain permiſſion from
" him, and from the King, that your mar-
" riage ſhall ſtill remain a ſecret. But if,
" as it appears by your letter a ſecret like
" this would be too painful a conſtraint on
" a mind ſo frank and ingenuous, if you
" conſent to acknowledge me for your huſ-
" band, when you come to Berlin, aſſume
" the name, the title, and the rank, of
" the Counteſs of Walſtein. This kind
" condeſcenſion, by ſatisfying your father
" and your King, may probably increaſe
" your freedom and happineſs. You will
" inhabit Walſtein houſe, you will com-
" mand my ſervants; pardon me, Madam,
" not mine, yours; you will prevail on your
" tender and reſpectable friend, whom you
" wiſh, and whom, indeed, it is your duty,
" never to forſake, to come and live with
" you. As for me, I here engage myſelf,
" by promiſes the moſt ſacred and ſolemn,
" never to return to Berlin till you yourſelf
" ſhall pleaſe to recall me; happy, too
" happy, if you but let me perceive a poſ-
" ſibility of our future re-union. I rely on
" your virtues, your principles, your ge-
" neroſity,

" nerosity, and will wait, not without im-
" patience, but without fear and without
" complaint, the day you shall please to
" fix.——This day will come; yes, I dare
" hope it will; you will, sometime here-
" after, fell the want of a sincere and bosom
" friend! and never, Caroline, no, never,
" will you find one more sincere, more af-
" fectionate than a husband who adores
" you, and whose whole happiness will
" consist in the desire, and the endeavour,
" to make you happy.

" I wait your answer before I depart.
" Direct it to Ronebourg, at the Baron of
" Lindorf's, who is the friend whom I be-
" fore mentioned, and of whom I shall here-
" after often speak, if you will deign to per-
" mit me to correspond with you, which
" will indeed, be to me a great consolation.
" Fear neither the King nor your father.
" I will take care to give a plausible pre-
" text for my travelling and my absence;
" which perhaps, may be very, very long;
" but the real motives of which they never
" shall know.

" Farewell, Madam; you, most likely,
" will approve of this my arrangement——
" Alas! it is very, very different from
" what I formed when I asked your hand;

"but, if your felicity be thereby enſured,
"the end I propoſed is ſtill obtained.

"EDMUND AUGUSTUS,
"Count of Walſtein."

The letter was ended; but what were the ſenſations of Caroline! Surpriſe, admiration, remorſe, affection? Who can anſwer? All! all mingled and together confounded. She herſelf knew not what! Long ſhe remained motionleſs, her eyes rivetted on that paper which had ſo entirely reverſed all her opinions, and the contents of which were ſo unexpected. Recovering from this kind of annihilation, her firſt impulſe was to riſe, open her bureau, aſſemble all the papers Lindorf had left, run to the chamber of her dear Mamma, and there bring her acquainted with this wonderful man! There inform her of the ties by which they were united, and ſeek, in her friendſhip, that aid of which her heart at preſent ſtood ſo much in need! This huſband who ſo lately had been an object of ſuch dread, aſſumed a form ſo wholly different, diſplayed a mind ſo congenial with her own, that ſhe now could gladly have claſped him to her boſom. Her fetters, ſo heavy half an hour ago, now ſcarcely fetters

ters ſeemed. "Ah! Walſtein," ſaid ſhe, "generous Walſtein; No; thou ſhalt not go; thou ſhalt not make thyſelf my victim!"

She ſtopped ſhort, fearing to engage herſelf too far. Her affections were ſtruggling; her mind was ſtill oppreſſed, but by ideas far leſs afflicting. When ſhe came to her friend ſhe had not the pain ſhe before felt in preparing the mind of the Baroneſs for the ſecret ſhe was about to diſcloſe; though this preparation was exceedingly neceſſary, ſo infinitely far was ſhe from imagining what ſhe was about to be told.——Caroline, her dear Caroline, ſo long married, and ſhe never to ſuſpect it! This was ſo ſingular an incident, ſo ſurpriſing and ſo little foreſeen, that all the tragedies, comedies, novels, and romances ſhe had ever read, afforded not one more ſtrange, more aſtoniſhing.

After various preparatives, therefore, and many tender careſſes, her pupil, at laſt, explained all theſe ſeeming myſteries in, as well as the reaſons for, her conduct. When the good Canoneſs had exhauſted her ſurpriſe, anger, and reproach; after ſhe had, by turns, been vexed and affected; after ſhe had plentifully wept and murmured; after ſhe had a thouſand and a thouſand times repeated, it was abominably monſtrous they

ſhould be afraid of truſting her with the ſecret, and ſtill more monſtrous that they had ſacrificed her poor girl; Caroline begged for, and obtained, half an hour's ſilent hearing. This ſhe employed to recapitulate every circumſtance that had paſſed with Lindorf; this was the moſt painful part of her taſk, but now ſhe was permitted to tell, ſhe was reſolved to have no reſerve, nothing concealed from her friend.

"No, dear Mamma," ſaid ſhe, affectionately, "your Caroline will have no more ſecrets for you; ſhe has ſuffered too much already by thoſe ſhe was obliged to keep. Only for theſe few days have I had the liberty to ſpeak, and but for a few moments the fortitude; for this I am indebted to the Count. Yes, to him do I owe the happineſs of daring to open my heart to you, and to have nothing painful to relate. Oh! Madam, when you ſhall know what an angel he is, and how great have been my wrongs, you will not any longer pity your Caroline; ſhe aſks only a little indulgence, and the patience to hear a long recital; for nothing, hereafter, Mamma, will I hide from you; no, nothing, nothing."

Caroline kept her word, nor did ſhe ſurpriſe the Canoneſs by confeſſing her love for Lindorf.—

Lindorf.—"Alas! I ſaw it will enough," replied the Canoneſs; "and I, poor ſilly woman that I was, congratulated myſelf on the diſcovery. I intended—Yes, yes, I had a great many intentions; had contrived every thing. See what on error your fine ſecret has led me into! Am not I acquainted with the effects of the paſſions? Amiable people meet, and, becauſe they are amiable, fall in love. We are formed for love, and to love eternally; for firſt impreſſions are never effaced."

"Ah!" exclaimed Caroline, with enthuſiaſm, "I hope, Mamma, you are miſtaken; I hope they ſometimes are effaced; at leaſt it ſhall not be my fault if they are not. No; it ſhall not."—"Fault, poor girl, it would be no fault of thine; but thy ſtruggles will all be in vain. What! ſurely I know! The more you combat love the more it increaſes. For how it is poſſible to ceaſe to love?"

"Very poſſible, Mamma, when love renders us guilty.—Oh! dear, dear Madam, you know not, cannot imagine, how guilty we both were; I for offending the beſt of huſbands, and Lindorf a friend ſuch as man never had before."

Caroline then began to read her manuſcript,

ſcript, and thought ſhe never could have got through it, ſo inceſſantly was ſhe interrupted by the exclamations of the good kind hearted Canoneſs. At firſt ſhe was in raptures with the brave General, who died to ſave the life of his King. Then too did the young Count intereſt her, but ſtill her dear Lindorf lay at her heart. "How charmingly he writes," ſaid ſhe; "how tender, how feeling his ſtyle! Ah! how ſorry am I! He would have been the huſband for my Caroline." When however they came to Louiſa, her friendſhip ſuffered conſiderable abatement.—"What praiſes does he beſtow on this girl! Is it for a gentleman, and a Baron, to notice whether or not a village laſs be pretty!"—But when ſhe beheld him ſeriouſly in love with, and deſirous of marrying her, ſhe could contain her anger no longer; nay, ſo great was it that Caroline felt ſomewhat ſorry for having given it birth.—"Speak not a word in his defence," ſaid the Canoneſs. "Oh! how has he deceived me! Love a peaſant's daughter! Intend to marry her! And, after that dare to pay his addreſſes to Miſs Lichtfield! 'Tis abominable! and thou oughteſt to think thyſelf moſt happy for having been married, and not made the ſucceſſor of this his

Louiſa

Louiſa. The ſecond love, truly; and the firſt for a poor villager! How have I been deceived in that man; and who hereafter may one confide in!"

Caroline, more affected than humbled at having been the object of a ſecond paſſion, made no reply, but ſighed, and again continued to read, as ſoon as the petulant Baroneſs would permit. In proportion as the fickle Lindorf ſunk in her eſteem, did Walſtein riſe; and he ſoon became her entire hero. His dignity, energy, and noble mind enchanted her. "You are too happy," repeated ſhe to Caroline, "to be the wife of ſuch a man! What tell you me of his not being handſome? You are wrong; he is as handſome as an Angel, and his ſentiments are the ſentiments of a God!——How did he ſpeak to that diminutive Lindorf? You do not find him in love with a village girl."

Yet ſhe knew not what to think, for a while of his behaviour to Louiſa; but, afterwards, when ſhe came to the dreadful cataſtrophe, when ſhe ſaw the Count wounded, diſfigured, and heard to what exceſs he had carried his generoſity and friendſhip, ſhe was ſuffocated, abſolutely unable to reſtrain herſelf, her tears, or her exclamations. Lindorf was a monſter and Walſtein

ſtein a deity, before whom mere mortals ought to fall proſtrate! Her enthuſiaſm increaſed in every line, and his letters to his friend made it aſtoniſhment! She proteſted Heaven had created this man, purpoſely, for her Caroline: his ſoul was not of this age, he was a Cyrus, an Oroondates, every thing ſhe had heard, read, or could imagine, of ſublime. "As to your Lindorf, you ſee he merely reſembles the preſent race; you will find he ſtill loves Matilda; nay, that he could love a dozen at a time. To be ſure, as to this Lady, ſhe is a Counteſs, but never will I forgive him his Louiſa. I make no doubt but he will return to Matilda, now; but I ſincerely hope ſhe will act towards him as I did to the High Chamberlain, when he came to offer me his hand after the death of thy mother, and that ſhe, like me, with noble pride, will give her refuſal.

"I hope not," cried Caroline, and the hope came from the bottom of her heart; even ſhe herſelf was ſurpriſed at it; never before had ſhe truly felt ſo anxious a deſire that Lindorf again might love Matilda, and that to her he might henceforth be no more than a brother. Walſtein, indeed poſſeſſed a ſoul ſo ſuperior, ſo tranſcendant, one to whom it was ſo honourable to be allied, that

Caroline

Caroline actually felt her attachment for Lindorf was not, at this moment, the ſtrongeſt attachment of her heart. It was a moment of enthuſiaſm, we own; and which the ſtrong and ſympathetic feelings of her friend had increaſed; but we may leave the taſk of ſtill increaſing them to the care of this friend.

When ſhe came to the laſt letter, which Caroline had received that day; the letter in which the Count ſpoke of her, thought of her, and confirmed her in the hope of for ever living with her dear Caroline; when ſhe heard the phraſe, *You will prevail on your tender and reſpectable friend, whom you wiſh, and whom, indeed, it is your duty, never to forſake, to come and live with you*; ſhe no longer could moderate her tranſports; ſhe kiſſed Caroline again and again; called her, her dear friend, her lovely Counteſs, and, while the tears trickled down her cheeks, added, "We muſt not let this angel depart, muſt we, my child? Muſt he go?" —"No certainly," replied Caroline; "I ſhould be the moſt ungrateful of women, were I to give my conſent. Permit me to go and anſwer his letter, immediately; for the courier returns this evening."

Caroline

Caroline left the good Baroneſs all amazement, all rapture at what ſhe had heard; and with matter ſufficient to employ her thoughts without dread of dulneſs from being alone. The very idea of writing to the Count would have petrified Caroline, had it been propoſed the evening before; while, at preſent, nothing ſeemed more eaſy; her heart overflowing with gratitude and admiration could not have found an employment more accordant to its feelings; her rapid imagination dictated a thouſand things, and, as ſhe entered her apartment, ſhe ran to her bureau. The firſt object which preſented itſelf, as ſhe opened it, was the box containing the miniature picture of her huſband. During her anger againſt him, to which the letter of her father had given birth, ſhe had concealed the box under the manuſcript which ſhe had that day removed; inſtantly ſhe took it up, opened it, and fixed her eyes on thoſe fine features, that countenance ſo noble and ſo mild; and, as ſhe looked, felt a ſenſation which never till then had ſhe known. She forgot how much his perſon was altered, imagined ſhe really beheld him, and was aſtoniſhed how ſhe could have refuſed her heart to the original of ſuch a portrait.

trait. Inſenſibly did ſhe become affected, tears roſe in her eyes, and with great emotion ſhe preſſed the picture to her lips.

Thus was ſhe in a moſt excellent diſpoſition to anſwer Walſtein; and, had ſhe written at that moment, the anſwer would have been much more tender than he had dared to hope; but deſirous of confirming theſe her new ſenſations, which were the more pleaſing becauſe unaccompanied by remorſe, ſhe would read once more the letter from the Count. Ah! what ungrateful, what cruel idea then ſuddenly entered her mind! It was that he, Walſtein, required this long, and, perhaps, everlaſting ſeparation; he who propoſed it, he who ſeemed to inſiſt on its taking place!——His reaſons were evident; he dreaded living with a capricious, unjuſt woman, who ſuffered herſelf to have been ſo eaſily prejudiced; a child, obſtinate, wilful, and void of reaſon; for thus, ſaid Caroline, I muſt appear to him; thus have I deſerved to be thought.

The phraſe in which he mentioned Lindorf, and which, before ſhe had ſcarcely remarked, made alſo an unfortunate impreſſion. "A friend whom an unhappy paſſion "obliges to travel. I am determined to "go with him."——How might the Count be

be ignorant of the object of this paſſion? Though Lindorf ſhould not have told him, he muſt, himſelf, have divined it; it was impoſſible to be otherwiſe. Beſide, does he not ſay he is "determined to go with him?"

We are alike eaſy to ſuppoſe what moſt we wiſh or moſt we fear ſhould happen, has happened. And now is the active imagination of Caroline buſily labouring to paint every object black; and now, the more ſhe reads that letter, which at firſt appeared ſo tender, ſo flattering, the more is ſhe convinced that the generoſity of Walſtein, only, has dictated his expreſſions, and that he ardently deſires to live from her. For what probability was there, were not ſuch his motives, that he would thus renounce his country, his employments, the Court, and the favour and friendſhip of his Sovereign? Had he had the leaſt wiſh to live with her, would he not have made the attempt? Would he not firſt have ſeen her and endeavoured to find what her preſent thoughts were, before he would make ſo cruel a determination?—"Ah!" ſaid ſhe, mournfully laying down the letter and the picture, "I had a momentary dream of almoſt happineſs, but it is vaniſhed. Happineſs is not for me!——How dearly would he have loved

loved me! But how may I now hope that ſhould ever happen; ſince he wiſhes not to know me, ſince he deſpiſes, nay, perhaps, hates me! And yet, how great is his generoſity, his benevolence! But does it become me to abuſe this generoſity, and after having ſinned againſt him ſo unpardonably, muſt I likewiſe baniſh him his country? No, never; I am determined how to act; I will here paſs my life far from him, far from the world; he ſhall be at liberty to remain at Court, to benefit his couutry by his virtues, to make thoſe happy who depend on him, and ſhall not himſelf be made miſerable by Caroline; he will forget, perhaps, that ſhe exiſts!"

In the full perſuaſion that all theſe ſuppoſitions were real, ſhe immediately took pen and paper; and, as immediately, wrote what follows.

From CAROLINE *to the Count of* WALSTEIN.

Rindaw.

"No, my lord, I will not delay to "write the anſwer you require; happy "if this my promptitude may any way "prove how grateful I am, how infinitely "obliged to the firſt, the moſt generous "of men! I ſhall not here diſcuſs what the motives

"motives were which might induce you "to make the propoſitions your letter con- "tains; yet, believe me, I feel their ge- "nerous tendency. I hope you will pardon "me for refuſing my conſent to your deſign "of leaving your country and friends; an "abſence like this might ruin all your fu- "ture proſpects, yet could not change my "deſtiny. Of this you have had the good- "neſs to leave me abſolute miſtreſs, and I "am determined, happen what will, here to "remain. My abſence from Berlin injures "no one, intereſts no one; that city has cer- "tainly forgotten a young creature whom "it ſcarcely has ſeen. As for my father, "he has ever been accuſtomed to live with- "out me; the Baroneſs of Rindaw, my "dear friend, or, rather, my tender mother, "is the ſole being in this world to whom "my exiſtince and my preſence may be "both uſeful and agreeable. I neither can "quit her, nor wiſh her to forſake that re- "tirement in which ſhe has lived ſo long. "Permit me, therefore, to conſecrate my "life wholly to her, to render her declining "years the ſame kind and continued cares "ſhe took of me in early and helpleſs in- "fancy. Your letter inſures your con- "ſent; and, provided we are ſeparate,

"wherefore

" wherefore ſhould this ſeparation be at a
" diſtance ſo immenſe ?

" I wiſhed to live here forgotten, and, if
" that be poſſible, in tranquillity; but for
" you my lord, you owe your talents to
" your country and your King, nor is there
" a motive on earth which ſhould ſway
" you to renounce employing them for the
" good of weaker, and leſs wiſe mortals.
" And is it for Caroline to throw the leaſt
" impediment in the way of purpoſes ſo
" noble ? Alas ! then ſhould I indeed be
" guilty, and the bitterneſs of reproach
" would make life wretched ! But no, I
" wiſh to be juſt, and will ſubmit to my
" fate ; nor ought I to grieve at it ſince I am
" permitted to live in the boſom of friend-
" ſhip, and in that peaceful retreat in which
" I have ever lived. The pleaſures of which
" you ſpeak are effaced from my memory,
" or, at leaſt, have left a recollection ſo
" faint, ſo ſhadowy, that I neither wiſh for
" nor regret them. Alas ! I have no re-
" gret but that of not having made the
" firſt of mankind happy, and wiſh I have
" none, but that of hearing in this my retire-
" ment, that he enjoys the felicity he ſo in-
" finitely deſerves. To this it is my duty
" to contribute, and this I dare promiſe I

" have

"have the fortitude to perform. Solitude "has nothing fearful for my imagination; "on the contrary, it is the boundary of my "wiſhes, and, ſince I am convinced it is "your deſire I ſhould live happy, I do not "fear you will give them any oppoſition— "The Count of Walſtein at Berlin and "Caroline at Rindaw will each be ſtationed "as they ought.

"My friend has this morning been in- "formed of our marriage; and ſince you "conſent I ſhould bear your name, that "ſhall henceforth be my ambition; there- "fore, hereafter, to thoſe few perſons whom "I may ſee, and thoſe to whom you wiſh to "confide the ſecret, I ſhall ever remain

"CAROLINE, Counteſs of Walſtein."

Had Caroline refuſed the title of Counteſs of Walſtein, which ſhe began to have ſome value for, the Canoneſs would by no means have acquieſced in this ſame kind of ſelf denial; for while Caroline had been writing, her good Mamma had taken care to ſend for all the ſervants and inform them that Caroline was Counteſs of Walſtein, with a ſtrict injunction to call her my Lady, in future. She was punctually obeyed, and, in the ſpace of a few minutes two or three of the maids, and as many footmen, entered,

tered, under different pretexts, purpoſely to repeat *my Lady*. "What will *my Lady* pleaſe to have? What are *my Lady*'s commands?"

No ſooner had *my Lady* ended her letter than ſhe ran to read it to her dear friend. "Yes, Mamma," ſaid ſhe, when ſhe had done reading, "I have taken a firm reſo-"lution to live and die here, and never love "any body but you." A few months before, this project would have enchanted the tender Canoneſs, but ſhe had now far different views. Her imagination was at the higheſt pitch of enthuſiaſm in favour of the Count of Walſtein, and his re-union with Caroline, the accompliſhment of which was now the object of every wiſh. But, as it was a part of her plan to leave the young Counteſs ignorant of the manner in which ſhe was determined to act, ſhe pretended to approve her letter. Nay, perhaps, ſhe took no little pleaſure in retaliation (for there is no age or character that will not indulge revenge which they believe innocent) and, in her turn, having her ſecret alſo. The letter was, therefore, ſealed and directed to the Count of Walſtein, at the Baron of Lindorf's, and ſome have pretended that a ſigh eſcaped Caroline as ſhe wrote the direction,

though ſhe, at preſent, proteſts not; and if there did, we may well believe it was the laſt.

And now, not only this day, and the next day, and the day after that, but every day, the Count was frequently preſent to the imagination of Caroline; and the more ſhe thought of him, the more ſhe delighted to think; all his letters were read, and read again; and ſhe every time thought ſhe diſcovered new proofs, which had not before been remarked, of the ſuperiority of heart and underſtanding of this excellent man, whom ſhe had known too late ever to be able now to merit. The picture was taken from its box, tied to a ribband, and hung round the neck of Caroline, which it no more quitted. Twenty times a day would ſhe take it from her boſom, gaze on it with tenderneſs, and put it back with a ſigh. But the more ſhe was convinced Walſtein would have made her a moſt happy woman, the more did generoſity, and, perhaps, vanity, applaud the reſolution ſhe had taken, well perſuaded he wiſhed not to live with her. There was ſomething, likewiſe, in her heart, which told her ſhe would much rather have him at Berlin than traverſing diſtant regions with Lindorf. Indeed the ſuppo-

ſition

ſition of herſelf being the cauſe of the exile of theſe two friends was inſupportable. "Let one, at leaſt," ſaid ſhe, "remain "happy in his own country." And thus to ſacrifice, in part, her own felicity to that of the Count was, in part, to expiate her own wrongs, and to obtain her own pardon.

While Caroline thus meditated the Canoneſs was not idle. All her reflections tended to find what might be the beſt means of re-uniting the huſband and the wife. Several very natural ones preſented themſelves to her mind, and which might eaſily have been put in execution. Such, for example, as to have a letter written to the Count, inviting him to come to Rindaw; or to take Caroline to Berlin, under ſome feigned pretence, and there contrive Walſtein ſhould meet her, or, which might ſtill have been better, to have reaſoned with the young Counteſs, and, by degrees, induced her to a re-union, which ſhe herſelf was too deſirous of long to have refuſed. But all this was much too ſimple for the Canoneſs of Rindaw, too trivial for the end of a romance, in which ſhe was quite in raptures to be one of the *dramatis perſonæ*. Surpriſe! Gratitude! Tears! Faintings! If theſe were wanting the ſcene muſt have been inſipid.

Read, therefore, what her prudent head imagined and brought forth.

One day (it was within a week after the letter of Caroline had been ſent) the Canoneſs ſaid ſhe had long had a deſire to viſit her Chapter, and to paſs ſome time there; "a duty," ſays ſhe, "I have too long neglected, and which I wiſh once more to perform before I die. I will therefore ſet off to-morrow morning, and beg, my dear, you will accompany me." Caroline, ſurpriſed at ſo unexpected a reſolution, repreſented, but in vain, that her age, her infirmities, the permiſſion ſhe had long obtained to live at Rindaw, all made this an unneceſſary journey. The Canoneſs was ſo poſitive Caroline could not long contradict her. Beſide that ſhe herſelf really took pleaſure in imagining a change of ſcene; it would retard her interview with her father, remove her for a time from a place which brought too many paſt incidents to memory, and thus relieve her melancholy. Another motive was added. Long had ſhe deſired to form an acquaintance with ſome young lady, to whom ſhe could reveal her ſenſations and her thoughts, and who might become her friend. The Baroneſs of Rindaw, it was true, was a friend; but the reſpect

ever

ever preſerved for a perſon by whom we have been educated, the great difference of age, and the infirmities which made her in continual dread of her death, and thus of being left in ſolitude, without a friend on earth, all increaſed an ardent deſire to find another, whoſe ſoul and ſentiments were correſpondent to her own, whoſe age was nearly the ſame, and with whom ſhe might freely ſpeak, or to whom ſhe might as freely write all ſhe thought and all ſhe felt.

"This," ſaid ſhe, "would give a charm to the retreat in which I am doomed to paſs my life. Ah! had I only ſuch a friend as I can imagine, how ſhould I love her, and how would ſhe love me! She ſhould live in my heart, and preſently would I forget other and ſtronger paſſions; forget that the man to whom, had I known him better, or better known myſelf, this heart would have been wholly devoted, now wiſhes to poſſeſs no place there!"

When they ſent her new books from Berlin, in which ſhe found a correſpondence between two friends, ſhe would ſigh, and ſorrowfully ſay, "Poor Caroline, thou haſt no creature, no friend, to whom thou mayeſt write all thou thinkeſt! Thou haſt no letter to receive!" This to Caroline was a real

grief, and when the Canoneſs propoſed the before-mentioned journey, ſhe imagined ſhe might ſurely find, in the cloiſter, young ladies of diſtinction, ſome one of whom would be worthy, would be capable, of friendſhip. At length, therefore, ſhe very willingly yielded to the project of the good Canoneſs, and prepared for her departure on the morrow.

In theſe her ſchemes of future confidence and friendſhip, Caroline did not forget her precious manuſcript and the letters, which were become the daily ſubject of contemplation; and ſtill leſs her dear little picture, which never quitted her boſom, except to be kiſſed, and with which ſhe every day grew more and more enamoured. Till the expected friend was found this picture held the place of one, and was become the confidant of her moſt ſecret thoughts; to this ſhe confeſſed all her regret and grief for having loſt, paſt return, the eſteem and friendſhip of its counter part; while the expreſſive, the comprehenſive countenance ſeemed, though dumb and motionleſs, to hear, underſtand, and anſwer. The happieſt moments ſhe enjoyed were thoſe in which this mute converſation paſſed.

Early the next morning the Canoneſs,

Caroline,

Caroline, and their maids were in the carriage. The former was all cheerfulneſs, ſhe was ready firſt, and ſeemed to take exceſſive pleaſure in the journey. As ſhe ſaw nothing, and had, therefore, no outward object to employ her thoughts, ſhe talked much, and wanted a deſcription of every place by which they paſſed. The firſt objects, after leaving the court-yard, were the pavilion, the window where Caroline firſt had ſeen Lindorf, the door through which he firſt had entered, and the road along which he had paſſed when he departed never to ſee her more. A little further were the turrets of the chateau of Riſberg; they had paſſed the wood in which Caroline had wandered, and come to the park where Lindorf had leaped the barrier to meet her; the difference between her former and her preſent ſenſations was very great; her heart did not palpitate now, but it felt a painful contraction. Inſtead of fixing her imagination on places that might retrace an obliterated paſſion, or, at leaſt, a paſſion remembered only with repentance and ſelf-reproach, ſhe turned her thoughts on the wrongs ſhe had done her huſband, and mournful was the reflection. We may reſt well aſſured, however, Caroline did not lead the communicative Baro-

neſs to ſpeak on ſuch a ſubject. The journey was performed without any accident, and her friend, infirm as ſhe was, preſerved her cheerfulneſs, though ſhe no longer called her dear Caroline, but dear Counteſs, and that, too, at every inſtant. She often attempted, likewiſe, to ſpeak of the Count; but Caroline, more prudent, and reſtrained by the preſence of the maids, equally fearing the Canoneſs might ſay too much or too little, took good care to turn the converſation on other ſubjects.

The place to which they were going was ſome days journey from Rindaw. Caroline ſuppoſed they were almoſt there, and was wiſhing to arrive juſt as ſhe ſaw the coachman drive down an avenue that led to an antique and large chateau, the weathercocks of which ſhe had perceived at a great diſtance. Caroline was ſurpriſed, and ſo told the Baroneſs, who, with ſignificant ſatisfaction in her countenance, anſwered, "the ſervants had obeyed her orders, for that ſhe meant to call and viſit a friend who lived there." Caroline had not time to aſk queſtions concerning this friend, of whom before ſhe had never heard mention made, for they were already in the court-yard. The Canoneſs called the footman, and bade him

him inquire if the *Count of Walſtein* was there, and if two ladies *of his acquaintance* might have the pleaſure of ſpeaking with him.

Caroline could not believe her ſenſes! "The Count of Walſtein!" echoed ſhe, with a cry ſcarce articulate. "Great God! Mamma! Did I hear you right! Where are we? Whither have you brought me?"

"We are at the chateau of Ronebourg," replied the Baroneſs, with infinite pleaſure, "and I have brought thee to thy huſband, my dear."

Poor Caroline ſcarcely hears the end of the phraſe: ſenſe and feeling have forſaken her, and ſhe drops, motionleſs, with her head on the ſhoulder of her imprudent friend! Her maid raiſes and ſuſtains her, informs the Canoneſs of the fearful ſtate into which Caroline is fallen, and calls for ſalts and hartſhorn, which, in their flutter, are not to be found! And now the Canoneſs, in deſpair, repents, too late, of what ſhe has done. Caroline continues lifeleſs, moves not, breathes not, betrays not the leaſt ſign of exiſtence!

All this paſſed in the coach, and in the middle of the court, in the front of the chateau, while the footman was gone to de-

liver his meſſage, and while the ſervants of the houſe went in ſearch of the Count, who was walking in the park with Lindorf.—Walſtein is found, but cannot imagine who theſe unknown ladies are; for the Canoneſs, always in ſearch of ſurpriſe, forbade the footman to give in her name, and the Count was very far, indeed, from imagining it was her, and his wife, from whom he had ſo lately received a letter. He, therefore, haſtens to receive the ladies, and, followed by his friend, arrives. The firſt object he beholds is Caroline, ſenſeleſs, with her lace cut, her hair looſe, her boſom bare; they are lifting her out of the coach in which the Baroneſs ſits weeping, and raving, and ſummoning the whole univerſe to the aſſiſtance of Caroline, of whoſe death ſhe accuſes herſelf, vowing not to ſurvive her.

If a ſpectacle like this well might affect the Count, inexplicable and ſtrange as it muſt be, what effect may it be ſuppoſed to have had on Lindorf, who, the moment he ſaw, knew Caroline? Scarcely could he believe his eyes! Scarcely credit the ſtrong emotions of his heart! "God of wonders!" cried he, as he ran up to the carriage, "can this be?" He could not doubt.

The livid paleneſs of Caroline, her cloſed eye-

eye-lids, the cries and groans of the Baroneſs perſuaded him ſhe had juſt expired, and he himſelf was preſently almoſt lifeleſs. Walſtein, who comprehended nothing of what he beheld, ſaw Lindorf reel, and juſt had time to catch him in his arms. He revives, and beholding Caroline ſtill the ſame, in all the agonies of deſpair, exclaims, "It is ſhe! It is Caroline! Your Caroline! My Caroline! Her whom I adored, her who now lies breathleſs, and whom I will follow to the grave!"

So ſaying, he tore himſelf violently from the arms of Walſtein, who ſtood ſpeechleſs and confounded! The exigencies of the moment recovered him from his ſtupor: he made way through the crowd of ſervants, whom the cries of the Baroneſs and the ſtrangeneſs of the ſcene had drawn together, and went to the aſſiſtance of Caroline. Expoſed to the open air, ſhe had begun a little to recover; her half-opened eyes endeavoured to move, and her woman, ſeated on the ground, ſupported her till an arm chair was brought, in which ſhe might be placed, and carried, more conveniently. The poor diſtracted Canoneſs, ſtill in the carriage, paid dear for her imprudence; ſhe wept, exclaimed, called for the

Count, and was unappeaſable till they told her he was there, and that Caroline was recovering.

Too true it was. Walſtein was there; but Walſtein knew not whether all he beheld was or was not a dream. Caroline at Ronebourg, and brought thither with violence! For wherefore ſhould ſhe, elſe, be expiring at her arrival? Lindorf in deſpair, and fled, uttering words of dreadful import, that ſtill reſounded in the ears of Walſtein. *It is ſhe! It is Caroline! Your Caroline! My Caroline! Her whom I adored!*——Ay?—Caroline?—Was it Caroline, whom Lindorf loved; and by whom he was again beloved? The Count endeavoured to doubt, to perſuade himſelf that his friend, diſtracted by grief, by the melancholy turn of his mind, had been deceived; but the Count could not ſo elude his fears.

Not the change which a year had made in the perſon of Caroline, nor that her preſent illneſs cauſed, could make Walſtein miſtake her. He ſilently fixed his eyes on her for ſome moments, then, kneeling at her feet, caught her hands, and preſſed them with ardour to his lips. The eyes of Caroline moved, but not as they were wont. They had no intelligence; ſhe knew not where

where ſhe was, or whom that man might be ſhe beheld proſtrate before her. Unable to articulate a word, ſhe gently withdrew her hands, joined them together, leaned her face upon them, and ſhed a torrent of tears: The Count, ſtill kneeling by her, endeavoured to calm and convince her ſhe had nothing to dread, but was diſturbed by the repeated cries of the Canoneſs, who inceſſantly called for him, as ſhe ſat in her coach, and who began to be very impatient that he did not come. At laſt ſhe called ſo loud that Walſtein was obliged to leave Caroline and go to her. He went with the hope of learning what might be the meaning of this ſtrange adventure; but the poor lady was ſo affected, ſo agitated, and ſaid ſo many things at once that to underſtand any one of them was impoſſible. The Count, beſide, was himſelf in a revery. When he came up to the Canoneſs he perceived ſhe was blind, and this was a new incident of information; he inſtantly recollected the blind relation of whom Lindorf had ſpoken, in his letter to Peterſburg, and to whom the lady he loved devoted all her cares. Could he have doubted of the fearful meaning of Lindorf's late exclamations, this would have removed

removed his doubts. Alas! they were certainties.

The Count helped the Baroneſs out of her carriage, and led her to Caroline, whom they had now ſeated in a chair; nor could ſhe be convinced ſhe was ſtill alive till the dear girl ſaid, with a feeble voice and a gentle mixture of reproach, "Ah! my dear Mamma, what have you done?" By little and little Caroline recovered her ſenſes, but ſhe was ſtill ſo weak, and ſo ill, as to be wholly unable to walk; the Count, therefore, ordered them to bear her gently into the houſe, and, giving his arm to the Baroneſs, followed.

They concluded it was proper to put Caroline to bed; as ſhe herſelf, indeed, deſired they would. The Canoneſs was determined to remain with her, and Walſtein, after having kiſſed her hand, which ſhe no longer withdrew, retired from her apartment and haſtened into that of Lindorf, concerning whom he was become very anxious. He entered, but no Lindorf was there; as he looked round the room, however, he ſaw a letter, lying ſealed, directed to himſelf. He took it, opened it with emotion, and read what follows, which had been traced by a trembling

trembling hand, expreſſive of the great diſorder of the writer.

" A moſt ſtrange, unexpected, and in-
" comprehenſible event has diſcovered the
" fatal ſecret which I meant to have borne
" with me to the grave. I was not maſter
" of myſelf; to behold Caroline dead, or
" dying, and to remain ſilent was beyond
" human poſſibility.—Yes, Walſtein, it is
" ſhe, ſhe herſelf, whom I adored without
" knowing, without imagining, you had the
" moſt diſtant claim to her. I call Heaven
" to witneſs that, the very moment I learnt
" ſhe was yours, I fled with a determined
" and unſhaken reſolution never to ſee her
" more. How was it poſſible I might fore-
" ſee that here, in this retreat, at my own
" houſe——Oh God! this only was want-
" ing to fill up the meaſure of my crimes;
" to complete my fatal deſtiny; this, only,
" of giving a new and incurable wound to
" him I had before ſo irreparably injured!—
" Yet, let me hope not. Oh, Walſtein!
" Caroline is a miracle! She alone is worthy
" of you, and you the ſole man on earth
" deſerving of her! May you be long
" happy!——I will deliver you from a
" wretched friend who ſeems to exiſt only
" for your torment. One favour, only, let

" me

"me aſk; it is the laſt; ſuffer your Lady "to remain ignorant that I have ſeen her, "and that you are privy to this my guilty "paſſion. Much am I deceived if ſhe herſelf "do not ſoon inform you of it; ſhe will "not long have any ſecrets for you. To "learn it from her own mouth will be a "moſt pleaſing proof of her confidence "in you, and ſhe will not ſuſpect I have "been deſpicable enough to betray her "ſecret. Walſtein! Caroline! Farewell! "Dear poſſeſſors of a heart alike torn by "love and friendſhip, for ever, farewell! "Forget, but do not hate, the miſerable "Lindorf!

"P. S. You will command, at Rone-"bourg, as at your own houſe; I have left "orders for that purpoſe. When I come "to any fixed place of abode, I will write "once more, Walſtein, that I may be cer-"tain you pardon me and are happy; and "happy you certainly will be, ſince Caro-"line is yours.

"I promiſe not to attempt my own life; "but muſt live far diſtant from you both."

This letter had been written with ſo much haſte and emotion that it was ſcarcely legible. Having once run it over, the Count immediately went in ſearch of Varner, the valet de chambre of Lindorf. His intention

tion was to ſend him off, immediately, after his maſter, to entreat him to return; but he preſently found this was impracticable. As ſoon as Lindorf had found his fears were falſe, and that Caroline was only in a fit, not dead, he inſtantly ordered his ſervants to ſaddle an excellent Engliſh horſe, while he wrote the above letter, after which he departed full ſpeed. He had told Varner to follow, with ſuch baggage as was neceſſary, and meet him at a place which he himſelf would take care to indicate; recommended every poſſible attention and obedience to the commands of the Count, and his gueſts, and inſtantly diſappeared, forbidding him to follow.

As ſoon as the Count found there were no hopes of overtaking him, at preſent, he made Varner promiſe to inform him, the firſt intelligence he ſhould receive, where his maſter was; then again peruſed the letter, which brought tears into his eyes. Walſtein now became impatient to learn what could have been the motive of this ſtrange viſit, and ſent to know if he might ſpeak with the Canoneſs in a private apartment. She came immediately, with the meſſenger, being as impatient to ſpeak as the Count was to hear. After informing him

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the Counteſs was fallen aſleep, "though," ſaid ſhe, "the cataſtrophe has not happened exactly as I could have wiſhed, are not you exceedingly obliged to me, Sir, for having brought you Lady Walſtein?"

"Before I can teſtify my gratitude, Madam, I muſt be certain ſhe was not brought againſt her will."

"Againſt her will, my Lord! Surely you cannot ſuppoſe it! Againſt her will! You do not know me. Do you think I would *force* the dear girl to any thing? No, my Lord, ſhe was quite pleaſed at the journey; nor has ſhe been ſo cheerful for this many a day as ſhe was on the road—Quite impatient to arrive"——

"This is very ſtrange; unaccountably ſtrange," interrupted the Count. "I imagined her fainting, her tears, what ſhe ſaid to you with a tone of reproach, were all"—

"All amazement, at finding herſelf ſo unexpectedly here—The agitation of a firſt meeting—I know not what—Young perſons are ſo timid. I own it would, perhaps, have been better to have prepared her for it; but then, on the other hand, where would have been the ſurpriſe? And, if ever your hiſtory ſhould be written, this will be the moſt intereſting event in your whole life.

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The Count, who knew not the romantic turn of the Canoneſs, aſtoniſhed at ſo ſtrange a remark, gazed with wonder, requeſted an explanation, and learnt, at laſt, that, though Caroline was not brought to Ronebourg againſt her will, it was without her knowledge; which proceeding he was very far from approving, and as frankly told the Canoneſs ſo, who excuſed herſelf by her ardent deſire to ſee them united, and the fear of not ſucceeding ſo well by any other means. "Yet," ſaid ſhe, "had I ſuppoſed—But, I confeſs, I had totally forgotten all that."

"What! What!" replied the Count.

"Oh, nothing—Nothing, nothing—Something I muſt not mention; though it was certainly the cauſe of that fearful emotion and fainting—But, a propos, my Lord: I underſtand we are here at the houſe of the Baron of Lindorf—that this ſeat is his—'Tis true, I ought to have known it; but I miſtook, or forgot, for my memory is become ſo weak lately—I believed, though I know not why, that Ronebourg belonged to you."

"No, Madam; but it is the ſame thing; I am at home, here; the Baron of Lindorf is my moſt intimate friend, and begged me,

me, in his abſence, to command his houſe and ſervants."

"In his abſence! What, is he abſent then?" "He is," anſwered the Count, who, could he have ſmiled, have ſmiled he muſt, at the prudent Canoneſs, who, with ſuch ſimple cunning, told all ſhe knew.

"Abſent! I am quite happy at that! It is the luckieſt circumſtance!"

"Why lucky, Madam?"

"I—That is—I—Becauſe—he will not be afflicted—I mean troubled"—

The poor lady knew not what to ſay; ſhe was ſorry to find ſhe had thought aloud, though that was by no means a new thing with her, and ſhe trembled leſt ſhe had diſcovered a ſecret which ſhe ſuppoſed it was of the utmoſt importance carefully to keep. The Count increaſed her embarraſſment.

"You mean to ſay, Madam, the Baron has avoided the ceremony of receiving ſtrangers; he not having the pleaſure of being acquainted with you?"

Notwithſtanding ſhe wiſhed to do it, the Canoneſs could not tell a falſehood with that intrepidity the occaſion ſeemed to require.—"No—Yes—That is— we are not wholly unacquainted; he happened to be

one of our country neighbours; his eſtate of Riſberg joins to mine, at Rindaw, and we uſed to ſee him every day: nay, indeed, he is, as I may ſay, one of our friends; though I think him a little given to change; a— a rover."

Walſtein, who thought the Baroneſs and this converſation very ſingular, was going to defend Lindorf, when repeated cries from Caroline's bed-chamber alarmed him. She had juſt awaked in a burning and delirious fever; and every ſymptom indicated the beginning of a very ſerious and dangerous illneſs. Her maid, whom ſhe did not know, unable to hold her, was obliged to call for help. The Count, deeply affected, went up to her bed, out of which ſhe abſolutely would get. "Let them take me back to Rindaw," ſaid ſhe; "I won't ſee him, he will kill me; I will depart alone, on foot; I will fly, to avoid him, to the world's end."

Her imagination, at other moments, full of Lindorf, made her take the Count for him; and, puſhing him from her, ſhe conjured him to fly; reproaching him for being the cauſe of all her miſery. Then, again thinking ſhe ſpoke to the Count, ſhe exclaimed, with the utmoſt tenderneſs, "Oh thou

thou whom, for my happineſs, too late I have known, thou whom I love, whom I ſhall ever love wherefore doſt thou fly me? But I will follow, will ſupplicate, will force thee to ſee and hear me."

Knowing only ſo much as Walſtein at preſent knew, it was impoſſible he could ſuppoſe Caroline thought of him while ſhe ſpoke laſt, or of Lindorf in what ſhe had ſaid before. But, afflicted as he was for himſelf, he was ſtill more ſo for Caroline. He would not leave her, but remained in her chamber all night, after having, with much intreaty, prevailed on the Canoneſs to ſleep in another apartment. Caroline continued in the ſame agitation and delirium. The Count, mean time, ſent to the neareſt town for the beſt phyſician the place could afford; and, likewiſe, ſent a courier, poſt, to Berlin, for the firſt men in the profeſſion. He alſo thought it prudent to ſend for the High Chamberlain; but, not wiſhing to alarm him, he only ſaid, in his letter, he intreated him to come, immediately, to Ronebourg, on an affair of the utmoſt importance.

The Count never quitted his poſt, by the bedſide of Caroline, except when obliged, and then reluctantly. At day-break the country

country phyſician arrived, and Walſtein was greatly alarmed at perceiving his ignorance. He pronounced it to be the ſmall-pox, though the Canoneſs affirmed Caroline had had it in her infancy, at Rindaw, and even told where pock marks remained, which put it out of doubt. Her fever and delirium increaſed, and on the third day ſhe ſeemed to be in the utmoſt danger. Imagine what were the feelings of the Count, thus removed as he was from all efficacious aid; for, let the courier make what haſte he could, it was impoſſible the phyſician from Berlin ſhould arrive before the ſeventh or eighth day. Theſe were days of cruel anxiety to Walſtein; they were paſſed in momentary dread of ſeeing her he adored expire. Her ſickneſs, by increaſing his feelings, increaſed his attachment: the aſſiduous and tender cares he beſtowed on her, the patience and gentleneſs ſhe diſcovered at thoſe intervals when ſhe was not delirious, the character her maids gave her, and the real grief they ſhewed, certain proofs how deſervedly ſhe was beloved, all ſtrengthened his affection. To the dread of loſing her was added the reproach of being himſelf the cauſe of her ſufferings. He was convinced the ſtratagem made uſe of to bring her thither,

thither, which was equivalent to violence, her dread of living with him, her paſſion for Lindorf, and the natural ſtruggles of love and duty, had thus endangered and might rob her of life. In one of theſe moments of grief, affection, and remorſe, proſtrate at her bedſide, he took a ſolemn oath, ſhould Heaven be pleaſed to preſerve her from the grave, be his ſufferings what they might, to make her happy.——"God of mercies!" ſaid he, with hands upraiſed to Heaven, "Save this unfortunate victim of tyranny and love! Deign to hear the vow I make of reſigning her to the man who poſſeſſes her heart!"

Caroline was incapable of underſtanding, or, perhaps, ſhe would have intreated him to have been leſs ready to yield her to another; but ſhe had lain totally ſenſeleſs during the laſt four-and-twenty hours. Happily, the King's firſt phyſician arrived that night. He did not diſſemble the extreme danger in which he found the patient, and his whole dependance was on her youth. He adminiſtered, however, ſuch aſſiſtance as had been too long delayed, and ſaid that if ſhe outlived the ninth and thirteenth days he then ſhould have ſome hope; but till they were paſt could not pretend to give any.

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The Count, though a prey to the moſt ſevere affliction, was obliged to diſſemble his feelings; for the Canoneſs ſuffered ſo fearfully that her inquietudes were not the leaſt of his diſtreſſes. The loſs of her ſight made it eaſy for thoſe who had no reſpect for truth to impoſe upon her; but not for Walſtein. Her queſtions were inceſſant, and ſhe was never ſatisfied unleſs ſhe heard the moſt exact and circumſtantial account. After he had been carefully attending on Caroline, and, overcome with fatigue, had retired to take a little repoſe, ſhe never failed either to come to him, or ſend to beg he would come to her. When he was abſent it was with the utmoſt difficulty they could keep her from Caroline, whom ſhe might diſturb but could not aid; the Count was the only perſon who had any power over her, and ſhe was never ſatisfied unleſs he was converſing with her. Thus was Walſtein often torn from the pillow of Caroline, though he was wretched if he truſted her but for a moment to the care of others. He ſupported all this with that patience, fortitude, and mildneſs, of which he alone was capable, and thought himſelf well rewarded for all his pangs by the melancholy pleaſure of watching the moſt adorable

of women. Then it was he felt a real gratitude towards the Canoneſs for having brought her; for he ſuppoſed her preſent illneſs had a more remote cauſe than the agitation her arrival had occaſioned: this might have haſtened its criſis, but he attributed it wholly to her paſſion for Lindorf and her affliction at the ſuppoſed impoſſibility of union. In this conjecture every circumſtance confirmed him, and her determination to paſs her whole life in retirement was not the leaſt. Again and again did he read the letter he had received from her, and in it could perceive nothing but a continued ſacrifice of love to duty. *Solitude has nothing fearful for my imagination; on the contrary, it is the boundary of my wiſhes.*—— "No, dear Caroline," ſaid he, "thou deceiveſt thyſelf; or rather virtue deceives thee. I were the moſt barbarous, worſt of men, were I longer to remain an impediment to the happineſs of two people to me equally dear, and who, for my ſake, are both deſcending to the tomb. O Caroline! O Lindorf! Wherefore do you not hear me? Wherefore may I not this moment beſtow you on each other?"

Neither did he doubt but that her tender exclamation, *Alas! I have no regret but that*

of

of not having made the firſt of mankind happy! was, at leaſt, as much addreſſed to Lindorf as to Walſtein!——"Happy," ſaid he, "ſovereignly happy, ought to be the man whom thou preferreſt; and happy he ſhall be.—Can I flatter myſelf with being this man? Oh! no; too well I know the contrary. But ſhould it be too late, ſhould Caroline be torn from us, ſhould remorſeleſs death prevent the reparation I owe her, ah! what muſt then become of me?"—— The thought was diſtracting, and yet this thought was every moment renewed.

The High Chamberlain did not arrive till the day after the phyſician; nor, perhaps, would he have been there ſo ſoon had not the letter of the Count found him ready to ſet off for Rindaw; he, therefore, had only to take a different road, and ſee at once his ſon and daughter; though this, or the cauſe of his being ſent for, he little ſuſpected. His coming happened to be on one of the days of criſis. Walſtein had not left Caroline a moment, and, in his anxiety, had wholly forgotten his father-in-law, when the latter, but half informed by the ſervants, from whom he had only heard that the Count was with his Lady, entered the chamber precipitately, ſaying aloud, as he opened

the door, "My daughter, the Counteſs of Walſtein, here, and I not know it! Where is ſhe, that I may embrace her?"

"Alas! my Lord, behold where ſhe is;" anſwered the Count, pointing: "ſhe ſeemed ſomething better, and we began to hope—But I doubt leſt your entrance"——

In fact, the patient, diſturbed at the noiſe, opened her aſtoniſhed eyes, looked round her, ſaw herſelf in a ſtrange apartment, her father and her huſband both by her bedſide, knew them, and, unable to ſupport ſo many emotions at once, fell into a more alarming delirium than ſhe had ever been in before. The phyſician came and inſiſted every body ſhould leave the room, and the Count conducted the High Chamberlain, in the midſt of his conſternation, to the apartment of the Canoneſs. Unable to remain long abſent from Caroline, he left them together, hoping, at leaſt, that the Baron would releaſe him from the care of attending on the Canoneſs; but this hope was of ſhort duration. Scarcely were they alone a minute before they mutually began to reproach each other. The lady that ſhe had been ſo long left ignorant of the marriage of her dear pupil, and the High Chamberlain that ſhe had not informed him of her having undertaken

dertaken this journey. Thus, proceeding from complaint to complaint, and from one cauſe of vexation to another, they at laſt were both ſo angry, and ſpoke ſo loud, that the Count was obliged to go and keep the peace. He found them both highly irritated, and reciprocally ſaying the moſt bitter things; though ſtill calling each other, from habit, My dear High Chamberlain! and My dear Baroneſs!

It is poſſible that, at ſome moments, ſuch a ſcene might have been amuſing; but not with Wallſtein's preſent temper of mind. He endeavoured to put an end to it, and re-eſtabliſh harmony, which he could no otherwiſe effect but by recalling to mind their former paſſion, at the recollection of which the poor Canoneſs melted. The High Chamberlain was not quite ſo ſoft; but the Count having reminded him of the obligations he had, and *might* ſtill have, to his friend, he was, almoſt immediately, ſo moved that he could not expreſs his feelings; he went up to his dear Baroneſs, and begged her to excuſe his warmth of temper; was ſorry, very ſorry, exceedingly ſorry; while ſhe with dignity and affection gave him her hand to kiſs, telling him he abuſed the power he had over her. After the

High Chamberlain had devoutly paid his reſpects to this once fair hand, peace was reſtored, and the Count returned to his beloved patient.

Where is the reader who is not by this time acquainted with the character of Walſtein? Who will not eaſily imagine, although it be not circumſtantially related, the deep affliction of theſe his days of incertitude and dread? The more he thought the greater were his terrors; and, during the latter part of this ſevere illneſs, he could not leave his Caroline, day nor night; he never quitted his arm chair, which was placed by her bedſide; and if, at ſome moments, over-wearied nature exacted a ſhort and painful ſleep, he ſoon waked and ſtarted, with the mortal dread of no more finding her who was now become the only object of his thoughts. The thirteenth day at length arrived, which the phyſician declared was to be the criſis of her fate, and a dreadful day it was. The Count wiſhed ſingly to ſupport its horror; he neither told the High Chamberlain nor the Baroneſs that, perhaps, at midnight, their friend and daughter would be no more. He determined to ſit up alone with her; and oh! how ardent were the prayers he ſent up to

Heaven

Heaven for her relief! With what agonizing affection did he preſs that feeble and burning hand to his lips and to his heart! How often did the tears ſwim in his eyes while fixed on thoſe of Caroline, to which the fever ſtill gave motion, and which, perhaps, ere morning would cloſe eternally!

This laſt criſis was ſo violent that the alarmed phyſician ſaid nothing leſs than a miracle could make her live over the day. The diſtracted Count, ſunk in grief, unable longer to ſuſtain the ſight, or to tear himſelf from the dying Caroline, had ſtill the farther pang of being obliged to prepare the father and the friend for the fearful cataſtrophe. He had ſo continually endeavoured to comfort them, and inſpire hope, that, far from ſuſpecting, they were lulled into a kind of ſecurity which muſt render the information tenfold horrid. The Count had promiſed to inform them how Caroline was, but, terrified himſelf at what he had to communicate, he ſtopped, for ſome moments, in the anti-chamber, to calm his own mind and collect all his fortitude. "Ah," thought he, "if this unfortunate father feels, as I do, all the weight of remorſe; if to the recollection of having ſacrificed his daughter her death be added, how may he

ſupport his ſorrow?—Oh! my Caroline, thy executioners weep, and thou dieſt! Yet wilt thou not die unrevenged; for, ſure, the torments I ſuffer are far worſe than death."

While he was thus heſitating, the valet de chambre of Lindorf, ſeeing him, came up haſtily, and told him he wiſhed to ſpeak to him; he had received a letter from his maſter, who was waiting for him at Hamburg, whence he was to embark for England. Varner intended to ſet off that very night, and only waited the commands of the Count. Inſtead of giving an anſwer, Walſtein ſtood ſilent; abſorbed in thought little ſhort of diſtraction: at length, ſuddenly ſtarting, he bade him wait, and went into his cloſet, without himſelf knowing what he intended.—

"Write to Lindorf! And at a moment like this! What ſhall I ſay to him? Shall I take the dagger, reeking from my own heart, and plunge it into my friend's? Shall I deſire him to return, only that I may behold him expire on the tomb of her he adores? Yet," ſaid he, with inſtantaneous recollection, "might not Caroline, might not love work a miracle, which, perhaps, is reſerved for love alone?—Were there but time!—If Lindorf were but preſent!

ſent!—God of Heaven! who heareſt my prayer, grant yet a few days, and Caroline, perhaps, may be reſtored!"

However vague might be the hope, that, juſt then, ſeemed to enlighten his imagination, he liſtened to it with pleaſure; and, ſnatching up the pen, inſtantaneouſly wrote the following words:

"Lindorf, wait not a moment; ſet off; "travel day and night: ſhould you not "meet me, come immediately here; and, "if meet me you ſhould, I ſhall have ſome-"thing to communicate.—We ſhall never "return to Ronebourg more.

"EDMUND COUNT OF WALSTEIN."

The Count himſelf took this ſhort letter to Varner, commanded him inſtantly to ſet off, never to ſtop, except to change horſes, and, as he hoped for future favour or affection, not to mention a word of the illneſs and danger of the Counteſs, fearing leſt the dreadful tidings might wholly incapacitate Lindorf for the journey. Should he have the miſery to loſe Caroline before the arrival of Lindorf, and to ſurvive her death, Walſtein was determined to go and meet him, that they might together leave this land of wretchedneſs and deſpair, and,

in a foreign country, together bear, together endure, their griefs and their regret.

This was deſtined to be a day of trial to the Count. As he was returning to ſee how Caroline did, a letter was brought him which had juſt arrived. At any other time the very ſight of the hand writing would have inſpired pleaſure. It was his ſiſter's, the young Counteſs Matilda, from whom it was long ſince he had heard; and, impatient as he would have otherwiſe been, he was then ſo wholly loſt in ſorrow that he opened the letter almoſt mechanically; yet, having read, it was impoſſible to remain inſenſible to its contents.

Dreſden, October 14, 17–

"I have been aſſured my dear brother "is returned, yet cannot believe the in- "telligence true: I know his heart, it "would ſoon have brought him to his poor "Matilda, or he certainly would, at leaſt, "have written to her, and his letter, and the "certainty he was no longer in another "country, almoſt another world, would "have been ſome little conſolation. Ah! "my dear brother, how many ſorrows have "I known while you have been in that vile "Ruſſia!— What would you have ſaid if

"you

" you no more had found your poor ſiſter?
" —For, I aſſure you, I would rather die
" a thouſand times than ever conſent to
" their wiſhes. The Baron de Zaſtrow is
" a fine young gentleman, an amiable
" perſon, poliſhed manners, and adores
" me.—With ſuch like diſcourſe am I per-
" ſecuted from morning till night.—And,
" if it all were true, what would that be
" to me? The Baron de Zaſtrow is not
" the Baron of Lindorf; and, therefore,
" is nothing—nothing to me.

" Alas! my dear, my tender brother,
" you ſee your ſiſter knows how to love,
" knows how to be conſtant, and that her
" levity is not in her heart. But ah! that
" levity is all vaniſhed; that flighty mirth,
" concerning which you checked me ſo
" much, when you were here, and which
" made you ſuſpect I had no affection, is
" all gone. I preſerved it as long as I
" could, becauſe ſorrow is no cure for love,
" and is, beſide, very troubleſome; and,
" being determined, certain of the love of
" Lindorf, of your ſupport, and my own
" fortitude, I thought I had nothing to
" fear. I now find my error, and my only
" hope is in my dear brother. The Baron
" teaſes me, my aunt torments me, and

"Lindorf writes to me no more; nay, "even you, my brother, ſeem to have "abandoned me: but into your arms I "throw myſelf; to you I appeal for ſuc- "cour and ſupport. Come and protect a "paſſion to which you gave birth, and "which never, while I have life, can end. "Is it not to you that I owe my dear Lin- "dorf? Remember how often you have "ſaid to me, My dear ſiſter, love Lindorf, "love him as you do me. And oh! "how willingly did I obey your injunction! "For I love him, not only as I love my "brother, but, as the man with whom, of "all the men on earth, I would wiſh to "live and die.—I will not believe his "ſilence is any proof either of inconſtancy "or forgetfulneſs. You were on your re- "turn, and he did not know by what "means to ſend me his letters. No, I "will not add to all my other griefs that "of ſuſpecting Lindorf; for that is an af- "fliction I certainly could not find ſtrength "to ſupport.

"Adieu, my dear, dear brother!—Ah! "did you ſee your poor Matilda, you would "not know her; ſhe neither laughs nor "ſings, but cries all day long, nay, ſeems "as if ſhe would not much longer be pretty;

"her

"her cheeks are not now as round as an "apple and as red as a roſe, as you ſo often "have kiſſed and called them.—Ah! re- "turn, return, my brother, and give me "back all I have loſt. If you come, my "cheerfulneſs, my felicity, my love, and "the roſes of my cheeks will all come with "you.——Ah! would you were married! "With what joy ſhould I leave this place "to live with you and your lady! And "why are you not? Make haſte then and "get married, and make two poor girls "happy, your wife and your

"MATILDA.

"P. S. Once more let me conjure you "to come to Dreſden, there to defend and "preſerve me for your friend, for the man "of your choice and of mine, or I will not "anſwer for what may happen."

"Merciful providence!" ſaid the Count, as he ended, "muſt every ſenſation that ought to add to my felicity become my tor- ment!"—He deferred anſwering his ſiſter's letter, and reflecting on her ſituation, till he could find a more tranquil moment, if ſuch he might ever find, and once more entered the chamber of Caroline, where all former ideas were effaced at the ſight of what he beheld. The Canoneſs, out of pa-

tience

tience that the Count returned not, had obliged them to lead her into the ſick chamber, where, unable to ſee, ſhe had ſeated herſelf at the ſide of Caroline, had taken one of her hands, and was entreating and conjuring her to give ſome ſign of life and recollection. But Caroline, feeble, inanimate, and apparently ſurrounded by the ſhades of death, anſwered not, made not the leaſt motion, while her unhappy friend yielded to all the dreadful ſenſations of horror and deſpair.

On the other ſide of the bed ſtood their two maids, weeping, and a little farther, the High Chamberlain, ſunk ſilent in an arm chair, with his hands ſpread over his face, and overwhelmed with grief. For the firſt time in his life, he felt that riches and honours were not ſufficient to make his child happy. The phyſician, in equal conſternation, ſat by his ſide, a mournful ſpectator of this ſcene of ſorrow, and without apparent hope of ever recalling Caroline to life.

The ſight, as the Count entered, the different attitudes and behaviour of the different perſons, made him conclude that all was over, and that the moſt angelic of women was no more. All fortitude and philoſophy now forſook him, his icy blood froze

froze in his veins, and ſeemed to give him hopes he ſoon ſhould follow; he flung himſelf on the bed of death, and fixed his lips on the cold lips of Caroline without perceiving that ſhe ſtill breathed. "Dear and beloved victim," ſaid he, riſing with diſtraction, "thou ſoon wilt be revenged."

The Count was going to quit the room in all the phrenſy of remorſe and deſpair, which might, perhaps, have induced him to make ſome raſh attempt upon his own life, had he not been intercepted by the High Chamberlain and the phyſician. The latter aſſured him the Counteſs was not dead, and that he had not even loſt all hope. "She lies at preſent," ſaid he, "in a kind of trance, the natural conſequence of the fearful ſtruggle ſhe juſt has had, and ſhe will paſs from this ſtate into a ſound ſleep, which will decide her fate; for, if ſhe awakes, I can then pronounce her recovery more than probable; but, conſidering her preſent weakneſs, I muſt own I think her awaking very uncertain."

"Oh God of benevolence!" exclaimed the Count, looking with fervour up to Heaven, and afterwards claſping the phyſician's hands, "is it poſſible! Sir, is it poſſible!

poſſible!—May ſhe ſtill live? Can my fortune, can my life ſuffice?"—

"At preſent, Sir, my art is uſeleſs, and every other human aid; to nature we muſt leave her, and to that conſtitution which muſt have been naturally good, or ſhe would have been dead before this. The cares of the lover and the huſband may be more efficacious than mine; to thoſe we will commit her. Come, Sir," ſaid the phyſician, turning to the High Chamberlain, "go to your apartment, and ſet your "ſon an example of fortitude."

They were about to quit the room when another ſtrange ſcene of affliction and death drew their attention. Well might they have been ſurpriſed at the ſilence of the Canoneſs, while all this paſſed; but, alas! the poor lady, whether her powers were too weak to reſiſt the terrors of the moment, or whether Heaven had ordained that to be the period of her life and infirmities, a ſudden ſtroke of apoplexy had, unperceived by every perſon in the room, ſeized her; ſhe was reclined on one of the pillows of Caroline, weeping, as they had imagined, but moſt unable to weep, though ſome ſigns of life ſtill remained. The ſervants inſtantly car-

ried her into her own apartment, and every immediate aſſiſtance was given, but ineffectually; ſhe expired in a few minutes, without ever recovering her ſenſes.

An event like this might well draw off attention, for a while, from the firſt object of their grief. The Count, himſelf, for a moment, in new aſtoniſhment and affliction forgot the old; but, ſuddenly recovering recollection, he envied the Baroneſs, whom he thought more happy than himſelf in not being able to ſurvive the friend ſhe loved.

As for the High Chamberlain, he ſtood wholly aſtound. To the ſorrow of loſing his ancient miſtreſs was added the fear of following her; he was the oldeſt of the two, and her ſudden death had ſo much affected him that he imagined he had only a few moments to live. To behold, in the ſhort ſpace of ten minutes, his daughter expiring, her huſband ready to attempt his own life, and his friend actually give up the ghoſt, might well terrify an old man who was tenacious of life in proportion to his attachment to his great wealth and high dignities. He every moment repeated, "I feel I am very ill!"

Walſtein, rouſed by accumulating terror

to

to recollection, ſaw the illneſs of the High Chamberlain was not dangerous, yet recommended him to the phyſician's care, left the corpſe of the Canoneſs to that of her women, and, after having ſhed tears of ſincere affection to the memory of her who had educated Caroline, and whoſe friendſhip for her had apparently brought her to the grave, again entered the apartment of his dying lady. He ſent away the attendants, and approached her bed with feelings that ſeemed the harbingers of horror. Caroline ſtill continued in that ſtate of ſtupor or profound trance in which he had left her; the exceſſive tranquillity of her ſleep was terrible; a motion of the boſom, almoſt imperceptible, was the only proof ſhe ſtill was alive, and this motion Walſtein imagined he every inſtant ſaw diminiſh. As he ſat beſide her bed, the tears fell from his eyes, unperceived by himſelf; inceſſantly did he place the downy feather on her lips to find whether ſhe ſtill reſpired; and ſo doubtful was it that he raiſed his hands to Heaven, and inſtinctively exclaimed, "Why, O! why, cannot I die, alſo!" Sometimes he fixed his eyes on her pale, yet ever charming, face, the features of which ſtill preſerved their enchanting form, and felt ſenſations of love, grief,

grief, and regret, ſo forcible that the moſt beautiful women in the bloom of health ſeldom have inſpired their equals.

"Angel of bliſs," ſaid he, preſſing his lips to one of her hands, "pure and celeſtial ſpirit, and ſhalt thou die then, and never know how infinitely thou art adored by the cruel huſband who has been thy aſſaſſin! Shalt thou die without pardoning him, without knowing that thou thyſelf mighteſt ſtill have been happy!—And thou, wretched Lindorf! where, where art thou, now, while thy Caroline is expiring? Thou mighteſt have reſtored her to life; and, by yielding her to thee, to thee ſhould I have been indebted for more than mine, alſo!"

Then would he riſe, after meditations like theſe, ſo overwhelmed with affliction as to be abſolutely without any diſtinct ideas, and, almoſt on the verge of diſtraction, would walk around the chamber with phrenſy in his countenance; till, ſuddenly recollecting himſelf, with reproach for having an inſtant quitted her, fearing leſt her laſt ſigh ſhould eſcape and he not preſent, again with impetuoſity would he approach. And thus was paſſed this dreadful night, which, notwithſtanding all he ſuffered, appeared to him very ſhort. The rays of morning

morning were the meſſengers of terror, the fearful moment approached, and the ſentence of the phyſician was continually preſent to his imagination; inceſſantly ſounding in his ear, *If ſhe awake, I can then pronounce her recovery more than probable; but, I muſt own, I think her awaking very uncertain.* This dreadful incertitude was every moment increaſed; for her ſleep, while it was lengthened, ſeemed every moment more profound, ſo that, at laſt, he no longer had the leaſt hope.

While the Count was ſtanding in this ſtate of dread and deſpair, he heard her reſpiration ſuddenly increaſe, approached, and ſaw her breaſt begin to heave; and, preſently, a deep ſigh, almoſt a groan, eſcaped. ——Ah! It is her laſt!——So fears Walſtein. The dreadful moment is arrived! He utters an inarticulate cry, throws himſelf on the bed, and claſps her in his arms, as if to ſnatch her from the graſp of Death, or himſelf die with her.

But Oh! bleſt ſurpriſe! Oh happineſs unhoped! It is not an inanimate corpſe; it is a living creature! that moves and endeavours to aid itſelf! The head, that hung helpleſs, attempts to riſe; the extended arms approach each other; the bloodleſs cheeks

and

and lips once more aſſume the feeble tints of reviving nature; and her eyes, which he thought for ever cloſed, now gently roll.—Caroline lives! Caroline breathes, looks around, tries to recollect herſelf, and fixes her attention on the Count, with ſomewhat of aſtoniſhment, but without the leaſt indication of fear; no, it was with a gentle ſmile, ſuch as the awakened infant gives its affectionate mother. She ſtretches out one hand, which he with rapture receives!——Oh! who may paint his feelings!——In a moment did he paſs from the pinnacle of diſtraction to the heaven of bliſs! Bliſs he ſcarcely could conceive real! His whole ſoul is in his eyes, that, voracious, devour every motion of Caroline; he preſſes his hand t her heart, kneels at her ſide, and exclaims, again and again, in a delirium of joy, "*If ſhe awake, her recovery is more than probable*——Oh! God of mercies! Oh! Caroline! Art thou, art thou reſtored to us? Speak, dear Caroline! Speak but a ſingle word; convince me, let me hear thy voice, tell me, is it poſſible thou canſt have recollected that huſband——I mean that friend, who would but exiſt to render thee happy?"

"Yes, Sir," ſaid ſhe, faintly, "I recollect you perfectly; there is no other perſon

ſon on earth who is capable of ſo much kindneſs, ſo many cares, and of ſuch unſhaken generoſity!—But where am I? Where are we?—At whoſe houſe?—For that I cannot recollect."

"Dear Caroline, think of your health; think only of your health, for our ſakes, and be tranquil; you are at the houſe of a friend, yes, a friend, Caroline; but let me entreat you not to ſpeak; permit me to call the phyſician."

He was going to ring the bell, but Caroline ſtopped him by laying her hand on his arm.—"Only one word, Sir, and I have done. I promiſe to be docile, but I muſt aſk you—Where is my dear mamma, my friend? Where is the Canoneſs? Is ſhe well?—How unhappy muſt ſhe have been on my account!—And my father? I have ſome confuſed recollection of having ſeen him, ſomewhere, not long ſince."

"He is here; and you will ſee him again, as ſoon as it is proper."

"But my dear mamma?"

"She has left us."

"Then ſhe is at Rindaw, I hope?"

Infinitely as Walſtein deteſted a falſehood, yet this was no moment to heſitate; the life of Caroline was at ſtake. "Yes,"

ſaid he, ſeizing the clue ſhe had given, "ſhe is at Rindaw, undoubtedly; have no fears for her; ſhe is well, ſhe is happy, ſhe is ignorant of your preſent danger.—But, dear Caroline, let me conjure you to think only of your own recovery, and how much the ſafety of all your friends depends on that; I am ſure this, to you, will be a ſufficient motive."

He rang, a ſervant came; he gave orders to call the phyſician, drew the curtains cloſe, ſat down by the bed-ſide, and, notwithſtanding the exceſs of his joy, was ſilent. And now, even at this happy moment, did the tender and preventive Walſtein begin to revolve how he beſt might execute the melancholy taſk of preparing Caroline for the death of her friend, ſo as to give her the leaſt affliction poſſible. The thing firſt and moſt neceſſary was to conceal it from her till ſhe had fully recovered her ſtrength. While he was thus reflecting, the phyſician entered and confirmed all his hopes. The pulſe, though very feeble, was excellent; every unfavourable ſymptom had diſappeared, and recovery was certain, provided proper care was taken. This muſt be inceſſant; but could this be wanting while Walſtein was preſent?

"Caroline

"Caroline is ſo good, ſo generous," ſaid the Count, "that ſhe herſelf, I am ſure, will be wholly obedient to your injunctions. Duty, friendſhip, love, all are ſuppliants; certain of being favourably heard by her ſympathetic and affectionate heart."

"Yes," ſaid Caroline, ſoftly, "do not fear, I will do every thing I am bid."—A tear that ſtarted to her eye proved how much ſhe was affected by the tenderneſs of Walſtein, and ſhe was going to have added more had not the phyſician impoſed ſilence. The Count and he went out together, and the phyſician inſiſted on the abſolute neceſſity of concealing the death of the Canoneſs from Caroline; for the leaſt emotion, he ſaid, muſt indubitably have the moſt fatal effects. The Count ſhuddered at the ſuppoſition, and, immediately, went with him to the High Chamberlain to conſult the means of concealing this event. A long ſleep, out of which he had juſt awaked, had ſomewhat diſpelled his late fears of death, and the reſurrection of his daughter gave him ſtill higher hopes; eſpecially when he remembered, which he very expeditiouſly did, ſhe was certainly left the ſole heireſs of her friend. The Count, fearing ſome imprudence

imprudence on his part, and no way averſe to rid himſelf of a man whoſe cold and ſelfiſh character gave him continual diſguſt, endeavoured to perſuade him that etiquette required he ſhould accompany the corpſe of the Baroneſs to Rindaw, and there ſee the laſt duties of humanity performed. This gloomy ceremony was not at all to his taſte, but Walſtein, deſirous of determining him to go, told him that the will of the Baroneſs was, no doubt, in favour of his family, and that his own intereſt required him to be preſent at Rindaw, where this will muſt be left, to take poſſeſſion of the lands and wealth bequeathed. This was ſo unanſwerable an argument to the High Chamberlain, that he never attempted to make another objection; he only required to ſee lady Walſtein, for thus he always called Caroline, before his departure. They therefore concluded to tell her that the High Chamberlain was going to Rindaw, to inform the Baroneſs of her recovery; and, when he was there, it would be eaſy to prepare Caroline, by degrees, in his letters, for the melancholy news of her friend's death.

Her father, therefore, was introduced into her chamber, where he told her, after

his manner, how happy he was to ſee her ſo well, and to leave her with a huſband to whom, and for whoſe cares and attentions, ſhe could not be too grateful: on which occaſion he informed her of circumſtances ſhe knew not before; and when he told her the Count had neither undreſſed himſelf nor once quitted her chamber for ſeveral ſucceſſive nights, the tears ſwam in Caroline's eyes, and, with tenderneſs and remorſeful recollection, ſhe ſaid, "Oh my Lord! how ſuperior, how noble is your mind! Ah! what would you do for a wife whom"—

She durſt not add "*whom you ſhould love,*" and the Count gave a very different interpretation to her break: he added "*who could love you.*" And thus did two hearts, naturally ſo concordant, miſtake each other, and prepare themſelves new vexations, new torments. Every time that Caroline, uneaſy for the health of the Count, conjured him to take reſt, and proteſted ſhe did not want aſſiſtance, he, perſuaded ſhe deſired his abſence, imagined that, to a good and feeling heart, the kind attentions of love it could not return, were each a dagger wounding Gratitude: and this painful, this diſtracting thought, would ſometimes make him

him abruptly leave her, which ſhe, on her part, attributed to indifference. Each, paſſionately in love and convinced they were not beloved, attributed all thoſe actions to generoſity, or to friendſhip, at the utmoſt, which ſprang from a very different ſenſation. But let us not anticipate; return we to the High Chamberlain.

We have before time ſeen he was not ſcrupulous to exceſs, concerning telling the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, on certain occaſions: he, therefore, ſo well played his part that his daughter, very unſuſpectingly, a thouſand times thanked him for his kind attention to her dear mamma, and a thouſand times intreated he would make haſte to Rindaw. And ſo many affecting expreſſions did ſhe uſe, concerning that dear friend, who no longer exiſted, that Walſtein, unable to ſuppreſs his feelings, intreated her to ſpeak no more, but to recollect the ſevere injunctions of the phyſician.

"Well, well, I will be ſilent; only tell her, my dear father, that it is for her, for her alone, and to ſee her, once again, Caroline wiſhes to recover. Tell her, alſo, that the moſt generous of men"——

He ſtood by her ſide, and interrupted her

by gently laying his hand upon her lips.—She was prompted to have given that dear hand a kiſs; nay, the firſt movement was made, nor do we know by what fear ſhe was reſtrained, nor what her feelings preciſely were. We only know a ſlight tremor ſeized her, and that the Count, perceiving it, was far from imagining its true cauſe. He haſtened the High Chamberlain away, and ſaw him get into the poſt-chaiſe with pleaſure. The corpſe of the Canoneſs was to follow by night, and her women, and the ſervants ſhe had brought, to which were added others by the Count, were to eſcort it: Caroline's maid and footman ſtaid at Ronebourg to attend on their miſtreſs.

The phyſician, whoſe affairs required he ſhould not long be abſent from Berlin, was deſirous to return; but the Count, however, by his earneſt entreaties, and the liberality of his preſents, prevailed on him to ſtay a few more days, and not to quit his patient, while the moſt diſtant poſſibility of danger or relapſe remained. Nor was this a diſtant period, each new day beſtowed new ſtrength; already ſhe began to ſit up, and to walk acroſs her room, leaning on the arm of the Count. Her recovery, at length, could no longer be doubted, and the doctor departed

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for the capital, rewarded beyond his hopes, for his ſkill and care.

And now behold the Count alone, at Ronebourg, with his Caroline.—His Caroline?—Was ſhe his? Alas! he durſt not regard her but as the ſacred pledge, the depoſit of friendſhip. His laſt ſhort letter to Lindorf was recollected; the lover muſt ſoon arrive, and ſhould he ſend for this unfortunate lover only to make him a witneſs of the woman he adored being in the poſſeſſion of another? and muſt Caroline, the tender-hearted Caroline, whom the ſtruggles of paſſion had brought to the brink of the grave, muſt ſhe ſee him again, again to loſe him? No; Walſtein never had ſo cruel a thought. More and more determined not to violate the oath he ſo ſolemnly had pronounced, when he beheld her dying, but to break the arbitrary chains that had bound her his, and unite her to Lindorf, he only waited the arrival of the latter to inform them both of his generous intentions, and the happineſs he was preparing for them. Fearing, however, leſt the exceſs of this happineſs might, at preſent, be too much for Caroline, he would not abruptly tell her all he meant to do; neither would he lay that grateful, that affectionate, heart under

obligations which would be too oppreſſive; ſtill leſs would he ſuffer her to ſuſpect the pangs his own heart felt in thus renouncing, thus yielding, her to another. "She believes, at preſent," ſaid he, "ſhe owes her life to me, and, I know, would willingly ſacrifice that life to my happineſs; but, no, dear Caroline, no, never ſuch ſacrifice will I exact; I, I alone wiſh, I alone ought, to ſuffer, nor ſhalt thou ever ſuſpect how infinitely I ſhould be miſerable; never ſhalt thou imagine how ardently I adore; friendſhip only ſhalt thou ſee, even when affection is the ſtrongeſt; and if I, in return, may obtain thine, if I may make thee and Lindorf happy, ſhall I be ſo wretched as I ſuppoſe?—Oh! Caroline, Caroline; yes, ſtrange paradox! I feel I may be wretched even while I am virtuous!——To yield thee to another, and not to die, I muſt no more behold, no more have intercourſe with thee!"

And according to ſuch ſuppoſitions did Walſtein form a plan of conduct from which he promiſed never to depart, till the arrival of Lindorf. Not daring to truſt the health of Caroline with any other, and unable, himſelf, to abſtain from the pleaſure of adminiſtering thoſe aids that might reſtore her to health, he ſtill continued them with

with all his former aſſiduity; but he took care ſeldom to be alone with her; or, if ſo, by chance, he found himſelf, he took up a book and read, or played on the flute, of which he was a maſter, to amuſe her. And when he read, and when he played, there was ſuch ſenſibility, ſuch paſſion in every tone, in every ſound, that the melting ſoul of Caroline was all rapture. Her mind, more ſuſceptible by her late ſufferings and preſent recovery, which gave a new charm to every object, became each day, each hour, more and more attached to that amiable huſband, ſo kind, ſo complaiſant, ſo deſerving of being beloved. Her inclination for Lindorf had but given latent paſſions action, had but rouſed ſenſibility and dormant love, of which, till now, ſhe had only felt the ſorrows and the remorſe; but, at preſent, authorized by duty, it had a charm, a faſcination; the words happineſs, love, and huſband, were united, and ſhe could not but hope he loved her, and had granted her pardon. Never did ſhe tire of making her maid repeat the various proofs of affection he had ſhewn, during her illneſs; the nights paſſed in watching over her; the deſpair ſo frequently viſible when he ſuppoſed her recovery impoſſible; while

each circumſtance augmented paſſion till love ſeemed unbounded, although ſhe durſt not give it an epithet more tender than gratitude.

Attentive to the leaſt actions of Walſtein, to every motion, and every word, ſhe was not long before ſhe remarked the uneaſy conſtraint he laboured under, and the care he took to avoid all private and particular converſation relative to themſelves. At the very beginning of her recovery he had told her his friend Lindorf was on the road, that he would not be long before he would arrive, and that he, in the mean while, had his houſe and ſervants at his diſpoſal. The beſt of motives was Walſtein's, when he gave Caroline this information; but ſhe, too weak, at that time, to enter into explanations, could not hear the name of Lindorf, and, eſpecially, his intended return, without a painful ſenſation, an inquietude ſufficiently evident, which but confirmed the Count in his ſuſpicions and intents. She, on the contrary, ſuppoſed he meant to try her; and, therefore, was the more confuſed. How often did ſhe, afterwards, reproach herſelf for not having ſeized the opportunity of the moment to open her heart; for not confeſſing her former and her preſent ſentiments!

ſentiments! Yet had ſhe a right ſo to do? When Lindorf fled and facrificed himſelf for Caroline, might Caroline be permitted to riſk the loſs of his friend; to rob him of a protector; who, at laſt, might tire of an attachment which, to him, had been ſo fatal?

To theſe reflections others were added, by which ſhe was reſtrained. How might ſhe be the firſt to tell the Count ſhe loved him, while ſhe doubted of his love for her, and while this doubt every day increaſed? His preſent conduct was the very reverſe of what it had been, during her illneſs; and ſhe knew not how to account for either the one or the other.——If he love me not, thought ſhe, inceſſantly, whence that mortal dread of loſing me? Whence that deſpair which had nearly deprived him of life? Or, wherefore thoſe raptures, ſo affecting and ſo dear to memory, on the hopes of my recovery? Still I behold his tears of joy, ſtill I hear thoſe expreſſions ſo kind, ſo affectionate, which love alone could dictate.—But wherefore are thoſe expreſſions heard no more? Or why, now I am able to hear and anſwer, is he ſilent? Wherefore does he avoid me thus? Alas! it was compaſſion which agitated his capacious and benevo-

lent mind, and which I misinterpreted love, and now, pity gradually decreasing, resentment succeeds—Oh! my Lord, and husband, didst thou but know my heart, my love, my repentance, surely thou wouldst not remain unmoved; surely thou wouldst pardon, nay, perhaps, mightest love, and we might still be happy."

Then did she bestow her kisses and her tears on the picture which her woman had taken from her neck, when she fainted, on their first arrival; and which had been carefully concealed. This picture she had asked for at the beginning of her recovery, and it was become to her the most precious thing on earth. At length, unable any longer to support incertitude so distressing, she resolved to oblige the Count to come to some kind of explanation, by testifying her own desire to quit Ronebourg. Nor was this desire feigned; with regret she saw herself in a place she had so many reasons to dislike, and which so continually brought to recollection an error she could not pardon herself. What the Count had said, likewise, concerning the return of his friend, alarmed her. She could not comprehend the motive of this return, but, be it what it might, to be found at Ronebourg would

be

be equally painful to him and her. She knew not how far the Count's knowledge of former tranſactions extended, for he neither ſpoke of Lindorf, himſelf, the letter he had received, the letters he had written, his deſign to travel, nor of the place where he intended to leave Caroline. In fact, he was wholly ſilent. Unremittingly employed, by his endeavours to amuſe and pleaſe her, his attentions were the attentions of love, his language the language of indifference. Sometimes, when he read a paſſage of ſenſibility, or played an affecting movement on the flute, the tears of ſympathy would ſtand in both their eyes; but, the moment the Count ſaw thoſe of Caroline, he would tear himſelf away, that he might conceal emotions he could not always conquer.

Then would Walſtein bury himſelf in the recluſe foreſt covert, or ſhut himſelf up in his cabinet, that he might freely utter his complaints, and vent feelings by which he was oppreſſed.—Happy Lindorf! would he ſay; thou knoweſt not all thy bliſs; knoweſt not my loſs. Come, Oh! come, and dry the tears of Caroline, which flow at thy remembrance, that I may behold her happy ere I die!

Sometimes he would reproach himſelf

for ſuffering her to remain ignorant of her approaching felicity; for not ſaying to her, Lindorf, the regretted, the beloved Lindorf, ſhall be your huſband. But how might he ſay this, unleſs he were more certain he could fulfil his promiſe? Lindorf came not, wrote not; and how if death, ſparing Caroline, had ſtruck his friend! How, if Lindorf was no longer a living being! His blood froze at the thought—— Merciful God! ſaid he, thou heardeſt my prayers for Caroline! Oh! hear them, alſo, for my friend! Let him return, let him be happy, and I, only, miſerable!

The ſituation of his ſiſter was an additional grief. Deceived by her cheerfulneſs, her levity, which was but the levity of infancy, and miſtaken in the perſeverance of her character, he had ſuppoſed her love for Lindorf very feeble, and that the Baron de Zaſtrow would preſently efface the fleeting ſenſation. But her letter ſhewed him his error, proved her paſſion real and laſting, and wounded him to the heart for having given it birth, unable as he was, honourably, to give it conſummation. Matilda, like himſelf, was in love, and, like himſelf, was wretched; he knew he had but to intimate a wiſh and Lindorf would

marry

marry her, would thus aſcertain to him the poſſeſſion of Caroline; Lindorf would refuſe him nothing, and Caroline was too much attached to her duty for him to doubt ſhe would any longer teſtify her former repugnance. But it was not for Walſtein to ſelfiſhly take advantage of the generoſity of others, and abuſe the power gratitude gave. Not his own, no, not his ſiſter's happineſs would he thus acquire; nor, indeed, was happineſs poſſible, unleſs it were mutual. The ſuppoſition of her being united to a man whoſe heart another poſſeſſed was not to be borne; he, therefore, reſolved, without explaining a ſecret which not only required too circumſtantial a relation for a letter to contain, but, by coming ſo ſuddenly might have a fatal effect, to prepare her for the loſs of Lindorf, and, therefore, thus he wrote.

Ronebourg, October.

"Yes, dear Matilda, I am returned; "your brother and your friend again are "yours; and, ſurely, you know, by ſym- "pathy you know, his ſentiments are ever "the ſame. They are a part of his being, "and fraternal love, the moſt mild, moſt "durable

" durable of all love, is not liable to
" change; but, on the contrary, a thou-
" ſand circumſtances and conſiderations
" ought to continue and increaſe it. The
" friend which nature firſt gave us ſhould
" have the firſt place in our affections. I
" did not think, dear Matilda, it was poſ-
" ſible I ſhould love you more than I ever
" have done; yet your laſt letter has in-
" tereſted me ſo much that it ſeems to
" have produced this effect. No longer do
" I love a ſweet little girl becauſe ſhe is my
" ſiſter, and becauſe ſhe is amiable, but
" I now find a friend, a tender friend,
" whoſe feelings I participate, to whom I
" am obliged for the confidence ſhe repoſes
" in me, and who, in return, merits mine;
" for I, like her, have need of counſel and
" conſolation.

" Ah! Matilda, your brother's pro-
" ſpects of happineſs are as few as yours.
" Yet, if I am not deceived, I hope, by
" affording each other mutual aid, by
" uniting our reaſon and our fortitude, we,
" perhaps, may riſe ſuperior to the misfor-
" tunes that threaten us, and create a ſpe-
" cies of happineſs for ourſelves, founded
" on ſelf-approbation, and the grateful re-

" membrance

" membrance of having ſacrificed our own
" felicity to the felicity of our friends.—
" You underſtand me not. Well, then, I
" will explain myſelf, as far as the bounds
" of a letter will permit. The circumſtan-
" ces, and they are many, ſhall be related
" when we meet, which will be ere long.

" My melancholy ſtory, Matilda, is more
" ſimilar to yours than you imagine. I,
" like you, love, and with no leſs violence;
" and I am of a ſex that has not the
" habit of holding the impetuous emotions
" of paſſion in due ſubjection. My love
" is unbounded, and yet—Be you the judge
" whether it becomes me to renounce it.
" I need but ſpeak a word, a ſingle
" word, and the woman I love is for ever
" mine; but muſt I ſeek my own happi-
" neſs at another's expence? Her heart is
" not mine. The man ſhe loves is worthy
" of that diſtinction, and his paſſion equals
" her's. On me, and me only, it depends
" for ever to ſeparate or unite them. Alas!
" dear Matilda, how feeble are reaſon and
" virtue, where the heart is ſubject to the
" imperious mandates of paſſion! Only
" imagine that the brother of Matilda is
" undetermined what to do; yet, I hope,
" he will not diſgrace his ſiſter. But Oh!

" my

" my dear, my tender friend, I ſtand in
" need of your ſupport; to be ſuſtained by
" your fortitude, nay, perhaps, by your ex-
" ample. Tell me, were you in my place,
" how would you act? And that you may
" the better decide, the better feel for me,
" ſuppoſe that you yourſelf were in the
" ſame preciſe ſituation; ſuppoſe it to be
" Lindorf you love who is beloved, whoſe
" deſtiny is in my power, and that I may
" beſtow on him, or for ever deprive him
" of, the object of his paſſion and mine. Ah!
" Matilda, already I hear you pronounce
" ſentence; I ſee my dear and tender ſiſter
" ſet me an example of fortitude and gene-
" roſity; ſhe rejects ſuch partial happineſs
" which to herſelf muſt bring remorſe, and
" to the man ſhe loves regret, grief, and,
" perhaps, deteſtation.———Regret! my
" dear Matilda? The happy mortal who
" poſſeſſes thee, ought to have far different
" ſenſations; nor will I ever preſent thee
" to one who knows not how to eſteem thy
" worth, and who cannot love thee, and
" thee only.

" And why may not the Baron de Zaſ-
" trow be this happy man? Why may not
" he love thee? Thou wilt anſwer, and I
" acknowledge, it is equally neceſſary thou

" ſhouldeſt

" ſhouldeſt love likewiſe. I ſhall ſhortly
" come myſelf, and, perhaps, ſhall find
" thou haſt been too ſevere in thy judge-
" ment. Thou ſeemeſt to own he is hand-
" ſome, amiable, and adores thee. Theſe
" are no common advantages, Matilda;
" and, remembering how highly thou wilt
" pleaſe thy aunt—Yet be not terrified, I
" firſt would know whether he deſerves
" thee; and if thou really canſt not love
" him; for, if ſo, thou art free. Yes, I
" promiſe thee, no earthly power ſhall force
" thy affections, while I exiſt.——Take
" courage, therefore, my dear girl, if Love
" ſhould have pangs in ſtore for thee,
" Friendſhip, I hope, may alleviate them;
" for my own part, I will not complain
" while in my ſiſter I find a friend. Lin-
" dorf is in England. Do not expect any
" letter from him; but I hope he will ſoon
" return, and then I ſhall immediately come
" to Dreſden, ſhall then open my whole
" heart, and then ſhall read thine. Shouldeſt
" thou perſiſt in refuſing the young Baron,
" I have another propoſition to make,
" which, perhaps, may pleaſe thee better.
" It is to come and live with a brother, who
" loves thee, till thou ſhalt have made ano-
" ther choice. But, whatever thy deſign

" may

" may be, reſt aſſured thou haſt a friend
" whoſe affection cannot be expreſſed —
" Adieu, dear and lovely Matilda, thou, I
" feel, mayeſt yet heal the wounds of my
" heart. Adieu, and think me ever the
" moſt affectionate of brothers.

" EDMUND, Count of Walſtein."

With this letter he ſent another to his aunt, Madam de Zaſtrow, in which he told her that certain reaſons obliged him no more to think of the union of his ſiſter and his friend; and that, therefore, he ſhould be happy could ſhe be induced to favour the Baron de Zaſtrow; but he conjured her not to be precipitate, and by no means to uſe the leaſt violence. He further ſaid he ſhould ſoon come to Dreſden, and intreated his aunt not finally to diſpoſe of his ſiſter till his arrival.

Theſe two letters being ſent, and thus being more tranquil, relative to the fate of Matilda, the Count applied himſelf wholly to the plan he had formed, in order to aſcertain the happineſs of Caroline. He had deſired the High Chamberlain to come to Ronebourg, ſo ſoon as his daughter ſhould be informed of the death of the Baroneſs. It could not be long before Lindorf muſt arrive,

rive, and the Count was determined to ſet off for Berlin the moment he came; pretending to have received an order from the King, and to leave Lindorf at Ronebourg, with the High Chamberlain, that he might obtain a divorce from his Majeſty, and his conſent, alſo, for the marriage of Lindorf and Caroline. He then intended to write and inform them of their happineſs; and, without ſeeing them, to depart for Dreſden. From Dreſden, he meant to go to England with Matilda; or without her, if ſhe determined to marry the young Baron de Zaſtrow; and to reſide there with his mother's relations. He felt ſufficient fortitude to make Caroline and his friend happy, but not to be a daily witneſs of their loves; and this plan, once fixed, he held to be unalterable.

Alas! he knew not yet all the power of love; had yet not felt all its vengeful effects. The more he ſtruggled with paſſion, the deeper was it rooted in his heart. How often, when beſide Caroline, unable to reſtrain his feelings, was he ready to kneel at her feet, confeſs his affection, his internal ſtruggles, his deſpair; appeal to her generoſity, recal to mind the ſacred bond by which they were united, the vows

they

they had mutually made, and employ every reſource, of pity and of paſſion, to ſupplicate her conſent to live and die with the huſband by whom ſhe was adored. By flight only could he obtain a victory over himſelf, on theſe occaſions. Once out of her ſight, and virtue, delicacy, and friendſhip, again were aſcendant. Love ceded to duty; and he had the fortitude to imagine Caroline in the arms of another, and not expire at the thought! Then would he remember Lindorf, baniſhed from his country, dragging un unhappy being through foreign climates, deprived of his miſtreſs and his friend, without conſolation and without hope; and, remembering, ſhudder and deteſt his weakneſs: again renew his oaths to ſubdue it, and, fearing to expoſe himſelf to future dangers, deprive himſelf of the pleaſure of ſeeing Caroline; who, ill interpreting the cauſe of his abſence, would, on her part, weep and afflict herſelf at conduct which ſhe ſuppoſed to be the moſt unequivocal proof of indifference.

In her moments of vexation and deſpair, ſhe ſtrengthened herſelf in the reſolution of returning to Rindaw, and of intreating, nay, of abſolutely requiring his conſent,

conſent, ſhould he offer any oppoſition. "Alas!" would ſhe reply to this doubt, "far from oppoſing, he will gladly ſeize the means of living ſeparate from Caroline.—Separate!—What! am I no more to ſee him, to hear him no more? And, when I quit this place, muſt a laſting ſeparation enſue? And muſt I aſk it; muſt I myſelf pronounce the fatal ſentence? No! never ſhall I acquire force adequate to a taſk like this! When he ſhall have the cruelty to command, ſubmiſſion will ſurely be ſufficient puniſhment."

Yet did her friendſhip for the Baroneſs, at ſome moments, make her even deſire this ſeparation, and vanquiſh her fears of quitting Walſtein. The High Chamberlain, as had been concerted with the Count, endeavoured to prepare her to ſupport the death of her friend. In his firſt letters, he ſpoke of remedies ſhe had taken, to recover her ſight, which were powerful and ſomewhat dangerous. He afterwards wrote word her blindneſs was paſt cure, and that it afflicted her ſo much ſhe had fallen ill. Caroline no ſooner heard this than ſhe wiſhed to fly to attend and conſole her; but ſhe herſelf was yet too feeble for the fatigues of ſuch a journey. She wrote

the

the moſt affecting letters, both to her friend and her father; and, every returning courier, hoped to hear of her recovery. At length the letters of the High Chamberlain became ſo alarming, and affirmed ſo poſitively the Baroneſs of Rindaw was in the utmoſt danger, that Caroline immediately determined to ſet off; and ſent to beg the Count would come and ſpeak with her.

He found her with her eyes ſwimming in tears, and well divined their cauſe.—"O! Sir," ſaid ſhe, the moment he entered, "read here what my father has written! My dear mamma is very, very ill; nay, perhaps, worſe than he ſays. Let me intreat you to give immediate orders for my departure; for I will inſtantly be gone to Rindaw. Never ſhall I forgive myſelf for having delayed ſo long. Should I be too late, ſhould I never more behold the tendereſt, deareſt of friends——"

The Count, finding this idea had preſented itſelf to her mind, and that the apprehenſion had had half its effect, thought this the time to inform her of the truth: beſide that her reſolution to depart, immediately, made ſecrecy any longer impoſſible.——"Dear Caroline," ſaid he, ſeating himſelf beſide her, and taking one of her hands,

hands, "let me intreat you, in the name of Heaven, to be calm; think of the injury you may do yourself! Scarcely recovered from a moſt dangerous illneſs, can you ſuſtain——"

"Yes, any thing, every thing! It is my duty to devote my returning ſtrength to the ſervice of the friend who has been, to me, the beſt and tendereſt of mothers. I feel how much I have neglected this duty, and ſhall, indeed, be moſt happy, may I but have the means to repair my wrongs."

She was going to riſe and make preparations, but the Count again detained her. "A moment, dear Caroline, be appeaſed for a moment, I conjure you, and liſten to me——I have alſo received a letter from your father."

"Merciful God!" cried ſhe, turning pale, and preſaging what was coming; "a letter to you! Tell me! I beg you, inſtantly, tell me its contents. Has my father concealed any thing?—Oh! Sir,—" Her oppreſſed heart could no longer reſiſt the violence of agitation, and her ſobs interrupted ſpeech. The ſilence of the Count, his downcaſt eyes, the timid compaſſion of his countenance, and the vague

anſwers

anſwers he returned, confirmed her fears, and her deſpair became exceſſive. "Oh God! Oh God!" exclaimed ſhe, "I perceive, I perceive I no longer have a friend, no longer have any thing in this world! My dear mamma no longer exiſts, and I have loſt my all!"

"Not ſo, dear Caroline; there ſtill is a friend in the world, who hopes to prove how dear you are to him, and how much he is intereſted in your happineſs."

Caroline loved this friend too well herſelf to be wholly inſenſible of that conſolation he wiſhed to impart; and to thoſe new proofs of tenderneſs which ſhe no longer had dared to hope. Her tears ſtill flowed, abundantly flowed, but leſs bitterly. In the aſſaults of violent grief, the feeling and impaſſioned mind experiences relief by the company of a beloved object, and in the alleviations of love. She grieved, but the Count grieved with her, felt as ſhe felt, and partook of her affliction. In theſe their moments of melancholy, their ſouls were in uniſon. Caroline had loſt the tendereſt of friends, but the very moment in which ſhe was informed of this misfortune was that which gave her the ſweet hope of being beloved, by the huſband ſhe adored; for, in this

his firſt tranſport of deſpair, which ſoftened fortitude and ſhewed Caroline ſtill more lovely, the Count was not able wholly to repreſs his paſſion. The ſorrow of Caroline demanded every care and conſolation friendſhip could afford; and Walſtein, while he endeavoured to aſſume the form of friendſhip, had all the tendereſt actions and looks of love. Caroline, thus, in the midſt of affliction, had a glimpſe of a happy futurity, and mourned that her friend was not to be a witneſs of her bliſs.

She deſired to be informed circumſtantially of her illneſs and death; but the Count, who underſtood nothing ſo ill as diſſimulation, referred her to the High Chamberlain, who would ſoon return; yet, to quiet her remorſe for having too long delayed going to the aid of her friend, he told her ſhe had died ſome time ſince, and when it was impoſſible for Caroline to have gone to her aſſiſtance. No ſooner was the High Chamberlain informed that his daughter knew the truth than he returned to Ronebourg, and told her, himſelf, ſhe was left ſole heireſs to the Canoneſs. She had made her will anew, after ſhe had been informed of her marriage, and it was to the Counteſs of Walſtein ſhe had bequeathed all her poſ-

ſeſſions: ſhe had indeed left a legacy to the Count, purpoſely, as ſhe herſelf had worded it, to prove how highly ſhe was ſatisfied at his union with Caroline. She recommended, in moſt affecting terms, the happineſs of this her beloved pupil, to Walſtein; and to Caroline that of the beſt and moſt ſublime of men.

The reading of the will drew many tears from Caroline; nor was the Count leſs affected. The High Chamberlain, alone, read it with perfect ſatisfaction, and comprehended not how an augmentation of fortune could become the ſubject of ſorrow. Caroline, alas! found only new motives, in theſe benefactions, to regret a friend ſo tender and ſo generous. Walſtein, diſtracted by a thouſand contrary ſenſations, could not hear of union and happineſs, which he ſo ſoon was to renounce, without extreme emotion. When the Baron came to that article, he ſuddenly kneeled to Caroline; "Yes," ſaid he, with vehement tranſport, "yes, by honour, by love, by every thing ſacred, I ſwear, you ſhall be happy, Caroline"—He could not continue; and Caroline, affected to exceſs, tenderly ſtretched out her hand to raiſe him, while ſhe felt, more powerfully than ever, that on him

him only, of all the world, this her promiſed happineſs depended, and on the ſentiments he ſhould entertain for her.

Had they been alone, perhaps ſhe might then have told him what hers really were; perhaps this might have been the happy moment of an explanation too long delayed; but the preſence of the placid High Chamberlain checked ſuch effuſions of the heart. He, with wonderful tranquillity, continued to read his will; which contained nothing farther, except legacies to ſervants and vaſſals. The Count, unable to ſupport the continuance of his preſent emotion and the tears of the compaſſionate Caroline, left the room and walked into the park, whither all his feelings went with him. He began no longer to underſtand his own proceedings; and, ſometimes, aſked himſelf wherefore he thus ſhould wilfully be forever miſerable. Wherefore ſhould he yield the poſſeſſion of her on whom he had ſo many claims, and without whom it was impoſſible to live? "She begins," thought he, "to be accuſtomed to me; nay, I even think I behold expreſſions of affection in her eyes. Alas! I know it can be but friendſhip, eſteem, gratitude; yet may not theſe ſenſations, in a mind like hers, well ſupply

the place of love? Or may I ever hope to inſpire others? Does ſhe not already grant more than I could ever expect? But, while I know, paſt doubt, her heart wholly appertains to another, to Lindorf!—Lindorf? Alas! perhaps he no longer is in exiſtence; perhaps he has fallen a victim to a paſſion the effects of which I have every cauſe to fear; perhaps he has ſunk under his grief, under the grief of Caroline, by which my own heart has been ſo often wounded, and which muſt be renewed, with ſuch exceſs, ſhould ſhe hear tidings ſo fatal!

The Count ſhuddered while he imagined he himſelf might be the meſſenger to inform Caroline of the death of the man ſhe loved; that he himſelf muſt then be conſidered as the cauſe of his death. The ſilence of Lindorf, after the ſhort letter he could not but have received, appeared to him a certain proof his fears were but too well founded; and ſo much did this and ſuch like fears torment him that ſcarcely could reaſon ſuſtain the conflicts of the heart. At one moment he would paſſionately wiſh the return of Lindorf, and dread it worſe than death the next; equally fearing to ſee him arrive, or to hear he was no longer in exiſtence. Thus did a man ſo philo-

philoſophic, ſo ſage, ſo wholly till then maſter of himſelf, at length, feel the empire of paſſion and its tyrannic power; and, while thus he felt, terrified at its effects, again ſwore to vanquiſh it, to devote himſelf, if it were not too late, to the felicity of thoſe he loved.

From one of theſe tormenting terrors he was, at laſt, relieved. He received a letter from Varner, the valet de chambre of Lindorf, to whom he had given his ſhort and preſſing letter, written to conjure his friend to return. "The good Varner entreated his Excellency not to be uneaſy "at not having yet received an anſwer to "this letter, for that, when he came to "Hamburg, his maſter was not there; he "had embarked, a few days before, for "England, with a Saxon gentleman: and "he, Varner, detained three weeks at "Hamburg by contrary winds, had neither "been able to join his maſter, who expected him at London, nor, conſequently, "to remit to him the letter his Excellency "had confided to his care."

The firſt pleaſure of the Count was to learn that Lindorf ſtill lived, and, by being able to travel, was in good health. Nor was this pleaſure ſingle; Lindorf had

not received his letter; his return was therefore deferred; and this ſhort delay, which likewiſe deferred the moment when Walſtein ſhould be obliged to quit Caroline, cede her to another, and live for ever from her, was to him an age of happineſs. He haſtened therefore to her chamber, that he might not loſe moments ſo precious. Her father was with her. "My dear Count," ſaid the High Chamberlain, as Walſtein entered, "my daughter, here, is exceedingly deſirous of quitting Ronebourg, but dares not ſpeak to you on the ſubject. For my part, I can ſee no reaſon in the world why you ſhould remain longer here; for, at preſent, the Counteſs is ſufficiently recovered to undertake the journey. The King may complain of your long abſence; he commanded me to haſten your return to Berlin, and in a tone that will not admit of longer delay; and I muſt certainly be gone; for my preſence is abſolutely neceſſary at court. If, therefore, your Excellency ſhall think proper to give orders, we will incontinently depart together."

The Count made no reply, but fixed his eyes on Caroline; in order to enquire of her countenance what was paſſing in her heart, and whether ſhe really wiſhed to leave

leave Ronebourg. Caroline bluſhed, looked down, and, by her ſilence, ſeemed to approve. Yet was the embarraſſment of the Count beyond deſcription great. He could not be ignorant how much the King deſired his return; for, ſince his arrival from Ruſſia, he had only remained four-and-twenty hours at Berlin; and had had but one ſhort interview with his Majeſty. To the friendſhip of the Sovereign, only, was he indebted for his preſent long abſence; and frequent couriers brought him preſſing letters from the King; or rather from a man who reclaimed his friend. Walſtein knew, likewiſe, that his marriage with Caroline was then become public. The High Chamberlain, who ſo long had laboured with this ſecret, had told it the whole world, as ſoon as his daughter was gone to Ronebourg. The King himſelf, knowing the Count and Counteſs were together, had openly ſpoken of their union; wherefore longer myſtery was impoſſible. Yet how might the Count, with his preſent intentions, take Caroline to Berlin as the Counteſs of Walſtein, and there preſent her at court, and to every body, by a name ſhe ſo ſoon was to quit?

He then felt how much the delay of his

letter to Lindorf deranged all his projects. He no longer could refuſe the requeſt of the King, which might every moment be changed to a command: he could not think of leaving Caroline, alone, at Ronebourg; and ſtill leſs of taking her to Rindaw, where every thing muſt tend to nouriſh and increaſe affliction. While reflecting, in this dilemma, how he muſt act, Caroline, preſſed by her father to confirm her deſire to depart immediately, ſaid, "ſhe ſhould, with pleaſure, accompany my lord the Count to Berlin; but that ſhe hoped, both he and the king would have the goodneſs, for ſome time, to diſpenſe with her ſeeing company; and that, while ſhe remained in mourning, ſhe might be permitted to live retired."

Walſtein eagerly caught the idea; and the health of Caroline, not yet ſufficiently re-eſtabliſhed, together with her deep mourning for a friend whom ſhe had loved as a mother, were, in reality, excellent pretexts for complying with her requeſt, and neither receiving nor paying viſits, at Berlin, for ſome months. In leſs time than that Walſtein well might hope his future fate would be decided. Caroline, mean while, would live almoſt unknown,

at Walſtein-houſe, where ſhe would ſee only her father, and himſelf; which, to him, was a moſt pleaſing reflection. It was ſome alleviation to deſpair not to be obliged to quit her before the dreaded hour of final ſeparation ſhould arrive. The ſage in love is but a man. The Count no longer ſaw impediments. Caroline living in his houſe, and in his ſight, was perfection of bliſs; and, though he ſtill deſtined her for a man he ſuppoſed ſhe loved, though ſtill determined carefully to conceal his own paſſion, he could not refuſe himſelf this intermediate enjoyment of happineſs; which, beſide, would remove every difficulty, relative to where Caroline ſhould remain.

The day of departure was, therefore, fixed; and the tender Caroline beheld it arrive with rapture. She ſhould no longer live in the manſion of Lindorf: it was now determined ſhe ſhould for ever paſs her life with the huſband ſhe adored, and ſhe thought herſelf certain of ſoon effacing from his memory, by offices of tender affection, the capricious and erroneous conduct which her heart, at preſent, diſclaimed; and which ſhe herſelf could never pardon. Walſtein, attentive to every action and look of Caroline, perceived ſhe

went with pleaſure; but this pleaſure he aſcribed to virtue, and to the deſire ſhe had, henceforth, of avoiding every thing that might bring Lindorf to memory. His eſteem, conſequently, his affection, were redoubled; but, thinking thus, he was but the more ſtrongly confirmed in his determination of rewarding the virtue he ſo much admired.

Behold them, then, at Berlin, and alighting at Walſtein-houſe; a place of ſo much former terror to Caroline. She entered it with all thoſe gentle ſenſations, thoſe mild hopes, ſo ſweet to the ſoul, and which ſeemed a prelude of the felicity ſhe was about to enjoy. To theſe ſucceeded the recollection of her bridal day, her behaviour to the man ſhe now adored, the mixture of hope and fear concerning the real ſentiments of the Count, and the melancholy reflection on the death of her dear friend, whom ſhe wiſhed a witneſs of her preſent happineſs. Theſe, all conſpiring, contributed but to augment that emotion which ſhe no longer could conceal, and which brought the tears into her eyes. The Count ſaw thoſe tears; his heart melted at the ſight; he attributed them to a very different cauſe, and would inſtantly have given

given her every aſſurance that cauſe ſhould be removed; but we have before ſeen the motives by which he was withheld. He would not give her a proſpect of bliſs as yet uncertain; nor would he have to combat with her delicacy and generoſity.—Neither, indeed, had he the power to pronounce *I yield Caroline to another.* No, he might have acted; but, on ſuch a ſubject, he could not have ſpoken!

The High Chamberlain ſupped with them, and retired inflate with joy at beholding his daughter now eſtabliſhed Lady of Walſtein-houſe. When he was gone, the Count led Caroline to the apartment which had long been deſtined to receive her; at the time of his marriage, and while he was far from preſaging the events that were to ſucceed. He had furniſhed it with all poſſible taſte and magnificence, in the dear expectation that his young and beauteous bride was ſoon to become its inhabitant. This expectation, at laſt, was realized. But how? In what manner? And at what moment? How much might he well regret paſt ſuſpenſe, and the hope which, during uncertainty, he had cheriſhed!

"This, dear Caroline," ſaid he, as they

entered, "is the apartment which has long been reſerved for you." Caroline, who ſuppoſed a latent reproach was lurking in theſe few words, looked down, and alternately bluſhed and turned pale. Walſtein ſaw this, but ſaw not the true motive. Eager to deprive her of her fears, "You," ſaid he, reſpectfully kiſſing her hand, "are abſolute here; queen of this apartment, neither I nor any one elſe ſhall enter it, without your free permiſſion."

Haſtily the Count retired; had he remained a moment longer, he, perhaps, had forgotten Lindorf and all his oaths—"Ye powers of friendſhip!" cried he, as he entered his own chamber, "ſuſtain my fortitude. Caroline, dear adored Caroline, Lindorf, my friend, appear, be ever preſent to my imagination, there inceſſantly repeat you cannot be happy aſunder!"

Thus did the whole night paſs in mourning over and lamenting his deſtiny, and the rigid ſacrifice which virtue, principle, friendſhip, and even love itſelf, loudly demanded. Caroline, though more tranquil, yet ſlept but little and reflected much. Though her chaſte ſimplicity felt not all the ſingularity of Walſtein's conduct, yet could ſhe not be wholly ignorant that her

ſpouſe

ſpouſe had a right to partake of her apartment; and ſhe thought her own wrongs too many, and too great, not to attribute his leaving her thus to well-founded reſentment. Succeeding evenings but confirmed the idea; Walſtein, fearing again to encounter dangers he found himſelf ſo near ſinking under before, not only forbore to accompany Caroline to her apartment but began, as he had done at Ronebourg, before ſhe knew the death of the Baroneſs, to abſent himſelf as much as poſſible, and never be with her, except in the preſence of her father, or her women; and even then he had an air of conſtraint, of anxiety, ſo viſible, he feared ſo much to meet her eyes, or to approach her touch, that ſhe no longer doubted of his indifference; nay ſhe even dreaded it was averſion.—This conduct, far from irritating, ſenſibly affected Caroline. Herſelf, alone, and her former caprice did ſhe accuſe. Perhaps he ſought to puniſh them, and he had good right; or, rather, her unjuſt ſlight, and the diſlike ſhe ſo long had teſtified, had at length wholly incurred his hatred. Yet his tender and continued cares, his mild and gentle attentions during her illneſs, and her grief, what were they?—Generoſity,

ſity, natural benevolence, ſympathy, compaſſion; which ever are inherent in the noble mind. But ſhe too plainly ſaw, at preſent, the chains by which he was reſtrained were become deteſtable: yes, he groaned over that fatality by which they had been united. She recollected his travelling deſign, and doubted not but he ſtill intended it ſhould take place; ſhe even, for a moment, thought to prevent his being again at the pain of propoſing her return to Rindaw; and thus, by voluntarily abſenting herſelf from the Count and the court, reſtore him the liberty of which ſhe thought him ſo ardently deſirous. But this propoſal was become much more difficult to execute than when ſhe wrote her letter at Rindaw. At preſent ſhe loved him, paſſionately loved him; and never could ſhe collect the fortitude to abandon the object of this her moſt tender affection.—Therefore, her deſign was no ſooner formed than forſaken; and to that ſucceeded the reſolution to try all poſſible means of regaining the heart of her huſband, and, by love, obliterating the remembrance of former wrongs. While ſhe meditated ſhe hoped. "He is ſo benevolent, has ſo much ſenſibility, is ſo little inclined to revenge

venge injuries," ſaid ſhe, "that, when he ſhall behold how infinitely I love him, will he refuſe to return my love; or will he not, at leaſt, grant me his friendſhip?"

Thus did the noble and ſympathetic heart of Caroline cling to her Walſtein; thus teach her how to eſtimate his worth; and thus did hope, with mild and benignant impulſe, bid her ſeek his ſociety with greater aſſiduity than ever he ſought to avoid hers. Obſervant of this new ardor, the Count, far from imagining himſelf beloved, attributed all the attentions, all the thouſand kindneſſes of Caroline to ſyſtematic gratitude, and duty; which a ſoul ſo feeling, and ſo virtuous, as hers, had impoſed upon itſelf. Momentary appearances confirmed the ſuſpicion. Caroline, young and timid, feeling ſenſations ſhe thought ſhe had not the power to communicate, reproaching herſelf for, and even exaggerating former errors, fearing by officiouſneſs to diſpleaſe a huſband prejudiced againſt her, often had an air of reſerve and conſtraint, which perſuaded Walſtein her heart was acting contrary to its moſt ardent deſires. Sorrowful at the ill ſucceſs of her endeavours to inſpire affection, often would ſhe ſuffer melancholy

to

to invade her mind; often would retire to her chamber, and on her lovely cheeks leave traces of tears which the Count imagined to be the bitter tears of duty; ſhed in lamenting the ſeverity of fate, that ſeparated her from the man ſhe loved.

Him, day after day did Walſtein wait for; him, the lover and the friend, for whom felicity ſo ſupreme was held in reſerve; nor could he comprehend wherefore he did not return. Beſide the letter he had ſent by Varner, he had alſo written after his arrival at Berlin; and his letter, under cover to, and recommended to the care of Lindorf's banker, at Hamburg, by him to be forwarded to England, muſt have reached him if he were not already on the road, coming back. This letter was more preſſing than the former. Without fully expreſſing all he meant, he uſed every argument to haſten his return. "On "this his own happineſs, and the happi- "neſs of thoſe he moſt loved, depended; if "prayers and entreaties were not ſufficient, "he abſolutely exacted a compliance.— "Recollect, dear Lindorf, how often you "have given me the right of diſpoſing of "your future deſtiny. This right, which "I hold from friendſhip, and, perhaps,

"from

" from gratitude ſomewhat too enthuſiaſtic,
" I now claim. Yes, I now recall to me-
" mory every circumſtance which may
" make you hold yourſelf my debtor, to tell
" you the hour is come when it depends
" on you to cancel them all, and, by one
" ſingle act, place all obligation to my ac-
" count. I can only add, if in a month,
" at fartheſt, I have not the pleaſure to
" embrace you, at Walſtein-houſe, you
" will give me reaſon to doubt of an at-
" tachment which I think I deſerve, and to
" ſuppoſe I no longer have a friend!"

This letter, ſo ſtrong, ſo preſſing, remaining unanſwered, gave room to imagine, and even to believe that, in fact, Lindorf had ſet out for Berlin before it arrived at England; and that conſequently he muſt ſoon be there. Dreadful as this moment was, in which a ſeparation from her he adored was to take place, ſtill Walſtein waited for it with a kind of impatience, ariſing from a conviction it would aſcertain the happineſs of Caroline, and from a wiſh of being himſelf freed from that inquietude which ſuffers the ſoul to wander among illuſive chimeras, which an inſtant might deſtroy, and to which miſery itſelf is ſometimes preferable.

How,

How, indeed, was he to defend himſelf againſt the phantoms of hope, ſeductive and dear as they are to the heart, and whoſe ſpells each day became more potent, more irreſiſtible? Nothing, indeed, but the modeſty and preſent error of Walſtein could have prevented him from perceiving they were not phantoms, were not illuſive. Far from deſiſting, Caroline was ſtill more affectionate, more attentive, mild and tender. The happineſs of her exiſtence was the prize for which ſhe contended. And how might ſhe perform too much for a huſband like Walſtein, whom ſhe ſo long had offended, by averſion moſt unjuſt; to whom her heart had been unfaithful, and which had ſo many errors, nay, to Caroline, crimes to obliterate? Repulſing diffidence, therefore, and hoping every thing from perſeverance and affection, a thouſand kind arts were employed to draw and attach him to her, of which love alone is ſuſceptible, and to which love alone can give ſuch wondrous force.

The Count was exceedingly fond of muſic, and Caroline was inceſſant in her endeavours to arrive at excellence. Often did ſhe entreat him to accompany her on the flute or violoncello, which he played equally

equally well; often did ſhe ſing, with all the charms of ſenſibility, the moſt expreſſive and melting airs, and ſuch as moſt were likely to make impreſſion on a ſoul like Walſtein's. The Count had a taſte and talents for drawing, but other occupations had prevented him from making any great progreſs in the art. Caroline, on the contrary, educated in retirement, had applied herſelf with infinite ſucceſs to that delightful art, which can people ſolitude, and, in deſpite of wintry froſt, retrace nature's beauties, create meads, rivers, mountains, and foreſts, and make permanent the fleeting and periſhing beauties of Flora. Caroline was particularly ſucceſsful in flowers and landſcapes; which alſo was the ſpecies of painting the Count moſt preferred. She offered to inſtruct him, direct his eſſays, and correct his errors; in return for which, ſhe entreated him to ſelect books, and ſuperintend ſtudies which ſhe was deſirous to engage in, but which are too generally neglected in the education of women. While he was drawing by her ſide, ſometimes would ſhe read, and her former cuſtom of reading aloud to her dear mamma, added to the native intelligence and feeling ſhe poſſeſſed,

poſſeſſed, rendered her indeed a moſt excellent reader. Walſtein, when he ſaw her fatigued, would read in his turn; and while her countenance, obedient to the powers of genius, aſſumed the paſſion or imbibed the wiſdom of the writer, her ſkilful and delicate fingers would knit, or knot, or embroider, the garter, the purſe, or the waiſtcoat; all of which were deſtined pledges of affection for her Walſtein. Ever deſirous of finding new ſources to give him pleaſure, every action had that for its object. For him only did ſhe exiſt, and continually would ſhe invent pretexts either to go into his apartment, or invite him into hers. Though ſhe ſaw no perſon but him and the High Chamberlain, who ſupped with them almoſt every evening, never was ſhe dull for want of company. Far from that, ſhe continually refuſed the ſolicitations of the Baron to preſent her at court, ſeemed moſt deſirous of prolonging her retreat, and, with mild and timid eyes turned to Walſtein, ſaid "never before had ſhe been ſo happy!" Yet, notwithſtanding all the thouſand hourly-repeated proofs of love which Caroline no longer ought to hide, ſtill did the Count, faſcinated by fear, and dreading

ing to yield to the ſenſations by which he was continually aſſaulted, repel truth, and retain foregone and chimerical concluſions.

"Not for me," would he ſay, "is it to be beloved. No: the affectionate, the tender, the adorable Caroline has the art of giving to friendſhip—alas! what did I ſay? Not even to friendſhip, but, to ſimple gratitude, all the appearance and expreſſion of love. It is not the preſence of Walſtein, but the remembrance of Lindorf, by which ſhe thus is animated; and to him, doubtleſs, doth ſhe ſecretly addreſs all thoſe affecting attentions, thoſe tender ſpeeches, and thoſe ſweet looks, which may not have me for their true object—What! know I not that ſhe loves Lindorf! Nay, that him ſhe ought to love!—Yet, ſhould it be true!—Should it be me!—Should my preſent intents, which diſtract and rend my heart, make me the moſt ungrateful of men!—Should that bliſs of angels, which I am reſerving for another, be deſtined by Caroline for me!—Alas, it cannot be.—Oh! Caroline! Caroline!—Yet, how may I know what paſſes in her heart, without acquainting her with the ſecrets of my own; without diſcovering the paſſion by which I am conſumed?

conſumed? And yet how may I make this known, certain, as I am, that duty, generoſity, and compaſſion would dictate her anſwer? Though ſhe love me not, her preſent actions and manner prove ſhe would not an inſtant heſitate to ſacrifice her heart and her happineſs to me."

Thus tormented, thus agitated, by hope and fear, did the Count make both himſelf and the tender Caroline miſerable. But ſenſations ſo violent cannot long endure: Lindorf comes not, nor will the Count find, either in delicacy or friendſhip, the power to reſiſt love that thus is induſtrious to convince him it is mutual.

One evening, when the High Chamberlain was detained at court, the Count ſupped alone with Caroline, who was more tender, more endearing, more enchanting than uſual. If ſhe *ſaid* not I love, it was almoſt impoſſible to miſunderſtand her *actions*. The emotion, the agitation of Walſtein augmented every moment, and he muſt either betray his feelings or fly the danger. He juſt had ſtrength ſufficient to perform this painful taſk, but it was the laſt effort of reaſon. Shut up in his own apartment, he reflected on his preſent ſtate, his love, his claims, and the conduct of Caroline.

"No," ſaid he, "it is not, it cannot be, illuſive. I am beloved. I no longer have cauſe to doubt. If I touch her hand I feel it tremulous; or if ſhe takes mine ſhe gently holds and preſſes it, unwilling it ſhould be withdrawn; if I quit her with mournful looks her eyes follow me; and, this very evening, I beheld them moiſtened with her tears. All the animation, all the tenderneſs of affection, were painted in her countenance; and yet I left her; yet I forbore to kneel at her feet; yet I forbear to tell her how infinitely I adore her; neglect to ſupplicate a confirmation of my happineſs, and of that love which every incident tends but to confirm."

Never had the idea preſented itſelf to him with ſo much force and certainty: it enrapt him ſo far that, no longer liſtening to aught but ſweet hope, he determined to return, confeſs his paſſion, and obtain from Caroline an avowal of hers, of which he no longer doubted. All his oaths, reſolutions, and projects diſappeared; all were annihilate; he forgot that Lindorf had exiſtence: Caroline, only, he beheld! His Caroline! To him united, by him beloved, and him loving; nor was there longer mortal man who ſhould bear away this treaſure of his ſoul!—In an inſtant, Walſtein,

ſtein, again, is in her apartment. He ſees her not, but he hears her guitar, hears the melody of ſounds that vibrate to his heart; he approaches, ſoftly, a door, half open, that leads to a ſmall chamber, whither Caroline had retired. It was her favourite apartment; there ſhe paſſed an hour, every evening, before ſhe went to bed, reading, ſinging, or playing. Caroline was half undreſt, reclining in an arm-chair, and gently touching her guitar as ſhe ſang. The air was melancholy, and ſhe ſeemed deeply affected; ſtopped occaſionally, and put her handkerchief up to her eyes; then again continued, with leſs power, but more paſſion, in her voice. Walſtein thought he had known all her favourite ſongs, yet this was new to him. He liſtened with mute attention, earneſt to hear the words. Caroline ſang ſo low that he could only catch now and then a line, one of which, however, ſtruck him, and he liſtened ſtill more eagerly. At laſt he diſtinctly heard the following part of a ſtanza:

Ah! wherefore, Love, or whither fly,
In ſearch of bliſs I'd fain impart?
If thou forſak'ſt me, how may I
Hope cheriſh in this bleeding heart?

The expreſſion, the marked tenderneſs, with

with which ſhe ſang, were ſufficient proofs that Caroline's complaint had reference to a real, not an imaginary lover. But who was this lover? Was it Lindorf? Was it Walſtein? Diffidence and doubt again poſſeſſed his heart; he looks, he liſtens, and preſently the ſhadowy pleaſure of doubt itſelf vaniſhes. Caroline laid her guitar in her lap, and untied a black ribband which ſhe always wore around her neck. Till then the Count had ſuppoſed it was only an ornament; but he ſaw with ſurpriſe a miniature picture was pendent to it, and which Caroline had always carried concealed in her boſom. Too far off to diſtinguiſh the features, he yet could ſee, as ſhe put it to the candle, that it was the uniform of an officer in the Pruſſian guards; it was, therefore, the uniform and the portrait of Lindorf! Caroline, at firſt, fixed her eyes upon it, then preſſed it to her heart, and next to her lips, with extreme paſſion. The tears ran down her cheeks, and fell upon the picture; ſhe carefully wiped them off, again looked and ſighed, laid it on the table, took up her guitar and ſang another ſtanza of the ſame ſong, which the Count diſtinctly heard.

The ſole, the ſovereign, balm I find,
Dear emblem of my Love, is thee;
Thou bear'ſt his features, but his mind,
Ah! who ſhall paint its energy?
Then wherefore, Love, or whither fly,
In ſearch of bliſs I'd fain impart?
If thou forſak'ſt me, how may I
Hope cheriſh in this bleeding heart?

When ſhe had ended, ſhe once more took up her picture, gave it another kiſs, tied it round her neck again, and, as ſhe put it down her boſom, ſaid, with a mixture of tenderneſs and chagrin, "Thou, however, ſhalt never forſake me;" then, taking up her candle, paſſed into her bed-chamber, after having rung for her attendants, without ſo much as looking towards the half open door. The action of riſing, the removal of Caroline, and the darkneſs, in which Walſtein was left, awakened him from a kind of ſtupor into which he had ſunk; from a dream of terror, which, as he awoke, inſtead of vaniſhing was confirmed! All his imagined happineſs was fled, and again he was ingulphed in wretchedneſs at the very inſtant imagination had conducted him to the ultimate of bliſs! Yet, ever generous, even in the horrors of deſpair, his firſt intention was, when he had ſomewhat recovered himſelf, to go immediately

mediately to Caroline, not to intercede for himſelf, but to aſſure her Lindorf, her fugitive, her beloved, ſhould return, ſhould be hers. The arrival of the maids, however, prevented him from executing this his deſign, and he preſently afterwards felt he no longer had the fortitude, perſonally, to tell her he would for ever yield her to another. His heart palpitated with ſuch violence that ſuch a declaration ſeemed as if it muſt have coſt him his life; and he even ſhuddered leſt, had he ſeen her at that moment, inſtead of acting as friendſhip and juſtice required, he, in his delirium, ſhould ſuffer paſſion to invade the rights of love.

No, he would ſee her no more! He might not, could not, durſt not, ſee her more! He ſtill found ſufficient virtue to fly, to reſtore her to liberty, but never to bid her an eternal adieu; or again to gaze on thoſe impaſſioned eyes, the danger of which he had ſo recently proved. He returned therefore to his chamber, where he paſſed ſome hours in a ſtate of undeſcribable anguiſh; incapable of determination, of all certi ude whether love or generoſity, Lindorf or Walſtein, ſhould prevail. He wrote letter after letter to Caroline: in one

he claimed his rights, and endeavoured to move her compaſſion: deteſting his tyranny, and tearing this, he began another, in which he bad her for ever farewell, without the leaſt mention of his own excruciating pangs. "What," ſaid he, again, with increaſing agitation, tearing the paper, "ſhall ſhe even remain ignorant of the adoration in which I hold her? Shall I die without ſo much as exciting her compaſſion?" He began once more; once more painted his love in all its enthuſiaſm, and the ſacrifice he was about to make in all its horrors. Still leſs ſatisfied than ever, he tried anew to write with more moderation; and again and again he tried, and was each time alike unſucceſsful.

At length, however, the fatigued and exhauſted ſpirit ſank into a gloomy calm, and Walſtein came to a firm and irrevocable determination.—This was, to go betimes in the morning to the King, who never was in bed long after day-break, and to whom he was never denied admittance, to obtain, immediately, without further let or delay, a divorce; to ſend it inſtantly to Caroline, and as inſtantly to leave Potſdam, retire to his eſtate, at Walſtein, and there make proper preparations for travels which

he

he knew not when he ſhould end. The more he reflected on preſent circumſtances, and the contrary paſſions by which he ſuppoſed himſelf and Caroline tormented, the more did he perſiſt in this project, and deeply regretted not having put it in execution immediately after his arrival at Berlin; inſtead of ſuffering himſelf to be thus ſeduced by the faſcinating pleaſure of living with Caroline. "Long ſince," ſaid he, "would ſhe then have been eaſy, and I myſelf perhaps leſs wretched; I then ſhould not have known the enchantment of her ſmiles, the irreſiſtible allurement of her friendſhip, and the bewitching influence of her attentions: or, at leaſt, I ſhould have known them but in part; attentions which I interpreted into love, and which might have ſupplied its abſence, had I remained ignorant that ſhe loves another, over whoſe memory ſhe in ſecret mourns. —Mourn! Does Caroline mourn? Caroline! For whom I would ſacrifice a thouſand lives! And ſhall I heſitate then to yield up my happineſs?"

The thought was moſt natural and appeaſing to the noble heart of Walſtein. He wrote, or rather began to write a letter to ſend Caroline when he ſhould have ob-

tained a divorce. He afterwards wrote alſo to the High Chamberlain, to give this tranſaction ſuch a colouring as that he might not impute it to his daughter, or Lindorf. Theſe letters he put in his pocket, and, aided by his valet de chambre, made every neceſſary preparation for his travels. As he ſuppoſed he was no more to viſit Berlin, he paſſed the reſt of the night in putting his papers in order, and collecting certain of them, which he meant to take with him. As ſoon as day appeared, he ſet off for Potſdam, where the King then was, and entreated a ſecret audience.

How, in the mean time, was poor Caroline employed?—She awoke from a ſweet ſleep, which had calmed her inquietude, and already began to be impatient again to ſee that dear and cruel huſband who thus fled her embraces, and whom ſhe yet had hoped to win by affection and perſeverance. Nay, indeed, ſhe had lately flattered herſelf with ſucceſs, and that there was very little of the extraordinary in his conduct. He ſeemed pleaſed to be with her, ſeldom left her during the day, and had all thoſe little preventive cares which are ſo peculiar to love; ſhe often caught him looking paſſionately at her, and, once,

once, ſurpriſed him ardently kiſſing a ringlet of her hair. What more was neceſſary to Caroline? Educated in the utmoſt innocence, without friendſhip or other converſation than that of the chaſte Canoneſs, never having read other books than what ſhe recommended, ſhe was moſt happy when in the ſight and hearing of her huſband.—To ſuppoſe herſelf beloved, to paſs her life in his company, was bliſs ſupreme; and when he quitted her, at night, her only chagrin was that of being ſeparated from him till the morrow. Theſe, likewiſe, were the only moments in which ſhe longer doubted of his love; "for," ſaid ſhe, "he might ſtay, if he pleaſed; we ſtill could converſe a little longer; or read, or ſing; and then, when I awoke in the morning, I ſhould have the dear pleaſure of ſeeing him immediately. For why might he not as well ſleep in my chamber as in his own? Oh! that I durſt but tell him ſo!—But he does not love ſo much to be with me as I do to be with him; he pines not as I do when we are aſunder."

Then would Caroline weep without knowing why; then would ſhe gaze on her little picture, kiſs it, repeat thoſe tender

things ſhe durſt not ſay to the original, commit it again to her boſom, go to ſleep with it, and, on the morrow, when ſhe met the Count, no more remember any thing but the pleaſure of being in his preſence.

This was nearly her diurnal hiſtory; though, on the evening we have been deſcribing, ſhe was more than uſually moved by the emotion of the Count; and, particularly, by his ſudden retreat, which came ſo unexpected, and which, by the manner of it, had produced this effect. She, then, began to reflect there was ſomething extremely ſingular in the conduct of her huſband; ſuch frequent inequality of behaviour, ſo many contradictions, and circumſtances ſhe knew not how to explain, raiſed her attention. Was ſhe beloved, or was ſhe not? To anſwer this queſtion ſhe endeavoured to recollect every incident that had any relation to Walſtein, from the moment after their arrival at Ronebourg. While thus ruminating, a ſong ſhe had compoſed, at the time the Count endeavoured to avoid her, and when ſhe imagined herſelf hated by him, was recollected, and the recollection affected her; ſhe ſung it, and her tenderneſs was redoubled.

bled. Then it was that the Count had overheard her, unfortunately, as ſhe was ending the ſong, which was as follows:

When now no longer ſtarting fears,
With boding ills, diſturb my peace;
Now love and duty dry my tears,
And bid my former terrors ceaſe;
Ah! where, my Love, or whither fly,
In ſearch of bliſs I'd fain impart?
If thou forſak'ſt me, how may I
Hope cheriſh in this bleeding heart?

Thy daily ſorrow, nightly care,
Each word, each look, to love I gave;
Love drove away the fiend deſpair,
And flew to ſnatch me from the grave.
Then wherefore, now, or whither fly,
In ſearch of bliſs I'd fain impart?
If love forſakes me, how may I
Hope cheriſh in this bleeding heart?

But if, deceiv'd, not love had aught
In what ſo well with love agrees,
To life, ah! wherefore am I brought,
To periſh by a worſe diſeaſe?
Ah! wherefore, Love, or whither fly,
In ſearch of bliſs I'd fain impart?
If thou forſak'ſt me, how may I
Hope cheriſh in this bleeding heart?

The ſole, the ſovereign balm I find,
Dear emblem of my love, is thee;
Thou bear'ſt his features, but his mind,
Ah! who ſhall paint its energy?
Then wherefore, Love, or whither fly,
In ſearch of bliſs I'd fain impart?
If thou forſak'ſt me, how may I
Hope cheriſh in this bleeding heart?

Had the Count heard the firſt ſtanzas he muſt have known they related to him; but the latter, and, eſpecially, the addreſs to the picture, wholly led him into error. His portrait it could not be; and the energy was the energy of Lindorf, who, flying, thus ſacrificed his happineſs to his friend.

As to Caroline, having ſung, wept, and kiſſed her picture, ſhe went to bed much relieved and more tranquil. "He loves me," thought ſhe; "I am ſure he loves me; but he believes he is not beloved. He remembers the repugnance which I ſo unjuſtly, ſo unkindly, ſhewed on the day of our marriage. And can he ſuppoſe I ſtill am unjuſt and unkind? But I will undeceive him, will forget my fears, will commit all the ſecrets of my heart to the boſom of my huſband, and prove how totally this froward heart is changed. To-morrow, yes, to-morrow I am determined I will tell him all; tell him every day, and every moment that I adore him, and we then ſhall ſee whether he will fly from me thus each evening after ſupper."

This reſolution made her perfectly calm; ſhe ſlept in peace, had delightful dreams, awaked with the pureſt ſenſations of pleaſure,

ſure, and was more than ever determined to execute the project ſhe had conceived on the over night. No more ſhe felt the ſame fears, the ſame diffidence of herſelf. Walſtein loves her; ſhe is convinced he loves her. Doubts and recollections of the paſt are the occaſion of his continued reſerve. Unable any longer to ſupport theſe, ſhe, with a word, will expel them all. Yes, ſhe will, will prove to him, by a thouſand incidents, that he is the ſole object of her affection; that he lives and reigns ſingly and wholly in her heart. Poor Caroline! that heart of thine, ſo innocent, ſo tender, may not contain its tranſports, while, in this delirium of bliſs, thou remembereſt it ſhall no longer have a thought concealed from thy beloved Walſtein; from that noble huſband to whom thou art indebted for thy life, and to whoſe happineſs this life thou meaneſt to conſecrate. But, ah! that heart not yet knows half it has to ſuffer!

Timidity is natural to youth, and eſpecially to youth educated as Caroline had been. The ſuperior virtues and wiſdom of Walſtein commanded a reſpect which not even the moſt mild benevolence could wholly obliterate. It was therefore that

Caroline had been ſilent ſo long; and even now, determined as ſhe is, ſhe knows not what means are beſt, how to behave, or what to ſay; and the more the moment approaches, the more her embarraſſment is increaſed. Oh! how does ſhe regret her dear mamma, who, had ſhe lived, would, long ſince, have been her faithful interpreter; the voluntary pledge of her truth and tenderneſs! But how might ſhe herſelf explain them? Should ſhe write?—She began, but her emotion was too great, her hand trembled, ſhe could find no expreſſions that could convey her feelings; no words were adequate to her ideas; ſhe could not frame a ſingle phraſe—"No," ſaid ſhe, "it will be better to go, to run to him, to throw myſelf into his arms, to ſay—Perhaps, I may not ſay a word, but ſurely he will underſtand my ſilence; ſurely he will not be able to look at me without imagining what I wiſh to ſay; he will pardon me, will diſpel my fears; reſerve, diffidence, and doubt, ſhall vaniſh all; he ſhall be wholly mine, and I wholly his; the happieſt of wives and of women!"

The thought inflames her ardour, ſhe kiſſes her little portrait to increaſe her courage, and flies to the apartment of the

moſt

moſt beloved of huſbands! She enters—But no huſband is there! He ſeems not even there to have ſlept!—A large trunk, in the midſt of the chamber, in which are various other packets, ſeems to announce a removal, or a journey.—Caroline ſhakes from head to foot! Scarcely has ſhe ſtrength to ring the bell! A footman appears; tremblingly ſhe aſks—"Where is my Lord the Count?"

The footman, ſurpriſed at the queſtion, anſwers, 'I thought my Lady had known'—

"Known, what?"

'That my Lord ſet off betimes this morning.'

"Set off!——God!——"

'William, his valet de chambre, has been up all night, making ready. He has left orders that this trunk and theſe packets ſhould follow. He does not know where my Lord is going, but he believes to England.'

"England!——Leave me!"

The footman goes, and Caroline ſinks in the firſt chair ſhe can ſtagger to; where, for the ſecond time in her life, ſhe feels all the affliction, all the torture of deſpairing love. A ſecond time ſees the man ſhe loves neglect, abandon, fly from her!—

But what a difference between the preſent and the former flight! When, at Rindaw, Lindorf left her, it was neceſſity, it was virtue, it was her own wiſh; the ſeparation was a cruel one, but the reflection that ſhe had done her duty was, indeed, the moſt effective conſolation! Beſide, ſhe knew ſhe was beloved, and that he who fled partook of all her affliction. Far different are her preſent pangs, which every circumſtance but augments. Not a clandeſtine lover but a beloved huſband flies, in whom every hope of future felicity centres. A huſband that hates her; or could he abandon her in a manner like this?—At what a moment too!

"Oh God! Then when I flew to him with open arms, when I imagined how unſpeakable his joy would be; then to depart, without mentioning the leaſt word of his intent, without ſeeing me once again! This muſt be hatred, or a moſt cruel, moſt unconquerable indifference! Yet, yeſterday evening, how did he look at me! With what tenderneſs did he take my hand, and preſs it to his heart!—It is true, he repulſed it again with terror, and inſtantly left me! —For ever left me!—No, no; it cannot, it ſhall not be. He is no diſſembler. Walſtein

ſtein is not the moſt barbarous of all human beings.—It is error.—The ſervant is miſtaken; he will return; yes, he will, he muſt; and here will I wait his return."

Scarcely had the poor diſtreſſed Caroline indulged this momentary glimpſe of hope, which ſomewhat recovered her ſunk ſpirits, before the footman re-entered, and brought her a packet of papers, ſealed up.—"It comes from my Lord, the Count; the courier is this moment arrived from Potſdam."

Caroline had juſt ſufficient ſtrength to receive it, and, by a ſign, bid him retire. And now behold her alone, holding the packet ſhe dares not open. Life or death lies there ſealed up. It was large, and addreſſed *to the Counteſs Caroline, Baroneſs of Lichtfield, in her Hotel*—It was ſtrange, this; moſt ſtrange!—"What! will he not call me by his name? God of Heaven! is it poſſible?" Her trembling fingers break the ſeals; and, as the cover is torn, ſhe finds, firſt, a parchment deed, next, three letters, and, laſt, an unſealed open paper, on which her eyes are riveted.

Souls of ſympathy, that now with Caroline remain in fearful ſuſpenſe, imagine a paper, a fatal paper, ſigned by the King,

ſealed

ſealed by the King; imagine a deed, or rather a declaration of divorce, by which *the King conſented to the diſſolution of the marriage of Edmund Auguſtus Walſtein and Caroline of Lichtfield, decreed it null and void, and the parties free to contract elſewhere!*

Yes, the eyes of Caroline were riveted, wild, yet ſhed not a ſingle tear! Thus, a while, ſhe ſtood: at length, the writings dropped from her hands, a dark cloud enveloped her, a cold ſweat overſpread her pale face; ſh e ſees no more, breathes no more, a univerſal palpitation ſeizes her; her laſt thought is a hope that the hand of death is upon her, and ſhe ſinks into inſenſibility!

Thus did ſhe ſome time remain; and, when nature began ſomewhat to revive, ſhe imagined ſhe had been in a fearful dream: but not long did this deception continue; the chamber, the trunks, the letters, the paper were there, witneſſes of the reality of her wretchedneſs. She looks at the direction of thoſe letters. The firſt is to her father, the ſecond to Caroline, and is rejected with horror—"What can he ſay, while thus he murders me, while thus he himſelf diſſolves our union?"

She examines the third, and what is her ſurpriſe! It is directed to the Baron of Lindorf,

Lindorf, at Walſtein-houſe, Berlin; and at the bottom of the direction is written, *I conjure Caroline to give this letter with her own hand, to my friend, the very moment he arrives, which muſt be ſoon*—"To Lindorf!" exclaimed ſhe: "and at his own houſe! And to me the letter entruſted! Oh God! Oh God! what can be the meaning of this? Lindorf here!—Could he be capable!—Is he the cauſe of?—Oh! would to God it may be jealouſy! How eaſily ſhall I be able to prove it groundleſs!"

Caroline eagerly takes up the rejected letter, addreſſed to her, opens it, begins to read, and hope revives in her heart.—No! not jealouſy, not hatred, not indifference, not reſentment are there; but generoſity, delicacy, love; paſſionate love, tender, exceſſive, heroic love; and in an inſtant Caroline paſſes from the depths of miſery to the pureſt heaven of bliſs. "He loves me! "He loves me!" ſaid ſhe, "he loves me! and our marriage is not diſſolved! Soon ſhall he know Caroline loves him alſo; will be his, and his only; will exiſt for him, with him, by him, and never, while life endures, will leave him more!" Bleſſed as this letter was, ſcarcely could ſhe end it, ſo eager was ſhe to give orders,

orders, inſtantly to prepare the poſt-chariot; but, while it is preparing, again ſhe reads, again ſhe devours its contents. The words are hoſts of angels, and the ſmall paper the infinite regions of bliſs.

" Dear and tender Caroline, ceaſe to " grieve, ceaſe to ſubdue your feelings; " not to a tyrant has the care of your hap- " pineſs been committed. The tears I have " ſo lately ſeen ſhed, on the picture of a " regretted lover, ſhall be the laſt which for " this reaſon you ſhall ſhed——Oh! may " my prayers be heard, and may the God " of goodneſs grant, as an ample reward " for my own ſufferings, that her whom I " adore may be henceforth, and for ever " happy! Then ſhall I, though ſeparate " and far, far from her, though knowing " her another's, ſtill be able to ſupport ex- " iſtence. Yes, angel of my ſoul, be hap- " py; be his whom your heart hath ſelect- " ed, and who merits, at leaſt as much as " mortal may, a bleſſing ſo ſupreme. No " longer ſhall your ſenſibility, by virtue " tortured, lament a union which your " ſoul abhors; no longer ſhall you ſhed " thoſe ſecret and corroding tears, which I " would rather periſh than be the cauſe of. " Love and duty ſhall be allied.

" Oh

"Oh Caroline! ſtill do I hear thoſe "moving, thoſe paſſionate ſounds, dic- "tated by grief, and addreſſed to the ob- "ject of your tenderneſs. But complain "no more; no more reproach him with "an involuntary abſence which he to "friendſhip thought he owed. He ſhall "be reſtored to your arms, Caroline; you "ſhall ſee him, kneeling at your feet, and "preſently ſhall you both forget your "former pains.

"Pardon, Oh! pardon, Caroline, that "I ſo long have neglected to give you "happineſs and joy. From the moment "that firſt I learned your ſecret, that fatal "moment when I ſaw you expiring, when "I felt there was a degree of miſery ſupe- "rior even to that of reſigning you, I "then ſwore to unite you to each other. "Caroline, thou thyſelf canſt witneſs how "ſacred I have held the wife of my friend, "the beloved of Lindorf—yet will I own, "blinded by my paſſion, I have had mo- "mentary illuſions, have thought it poſ- "ſible I myſelf might be ineffably bleſſed, "have miſinterpreted the efforts of duty "and virtue into ſofter ſenſations, and had "almoſt prepared the iron ſcourge of ne- "ver ending regret for myſelf, and pining

"grief

" grief and melancholy for thee. But it is
" paſt, the charm is broken, and I feel it
" is time to fly. Yes, in a delirium of
" hope was I almoſt loſt; but, with the
" firſt rays of returning day, I will depart
" to obtain what ſhall for ever baniſh all
" ſuch future raſh hopes, to which I have
" too, too, weakly yielded. I go to re-
" ſtore you to yourſelf; or, rather, to the
" original of that picture you hold ſo dear.
" Farewell, Caroline; I perceive I ſay what
" I ought not; I ſhall give a pang to your
" generous and tender heart, by expoſing
" the weakneſs of my own. At length,
" however, dear Caroline, know me for
" what I am. Know that, be my miſery
" what it may in quitting you, in renoun-
" cing you thus eternally, it ſtill would be
" infinitely greater were I to remain and
" uſurp thoſe rights which are due to love
" alone. To poſſeſs the perſon of Caro-
" line and to know that another poſſeſſes
" her heart, to be equally an impediment
" to her happineſs and the happineſs of a
" dear and reſpected friend, this were im-
" poſſible to ſupport! But to be a ſpecta-
" tor of, or, at leaſt, to imagine, your
" mutual felicity, will ſpread a gleam of
" comfort over deſponding life. Caroline

" will

" will owe that felicity to me, will think of " me with tenderneſs and gratitude; and " thus, while I live, I ſhall live certain of " her friendſhip, and when I die ſhe will " ſhed a tear over my tomb.——Farewell! " —Caroline, farewell! I fly to merit the " friendſhip I ſo earneſtly covet.

" *Berlin, five o'clock in the morning.*

" *P. S. Dated at Potſdam, ten o'clock,* " *and after having had an audience with the* " *King.*

" All is over, the chains which have " ever hung ſo heavy on Caroline are bro- " ken. She is free, and ſhall ſoon be " Lindorf's. Oh! tell me, tell me, Ca- " roline, that you are happy. Let me have " this conſolation——My friend is igno- " rant of the bliſs that awaits him. I know " his generous friendſhip, and the ſame " feelings that drove him from Rindaw and " his country, may, perhaps, ſtill make " him refuſe this felicity. This muſt not " be: for this reaſon I have written a letter, " addreſſed to him, which will end all his " ſcruples, and prove that he only can " contribute to the ſmall degree of happi- " neſs of which Walſtein is now capable by " making himſelf and Caroline happy.

" I ſtill have a favour to aſk, and, ſurely,

" Caroline,

" Caroline, in a moment like this, will not, " by refuſal, increaſe my griefs. No, I " know her heart too well.—It is to accept " the houſe ſhe at preſent inhabits. You " like its ſituation, Caroline; your apart- " ments pleaſe you; they were deſigned " for you, furniſhed for you, and never " ſhall any one but you inhabit them— " You will not, ſurely you will not, by a " cruel denial, make your wretched friend " ſtill more wretched.

" Again and again, farewell! Dear and " adored Caroline, farewell!—And is it " true, then, that you are no longer mine, " that I no longer have the leaſt right?— " What talk I of rights? I never had any; " thoſe the heart only can accord, and, at " preſent, I ſhall be certain of your pity " and eſteem. Ah would you but ſome- " times write to me, would you but de- " ſcribe your happineſs—But no, it can- " not be: never muſt I write to the wife of " Lindorf. If Caroline of Lichtfield will " for once deign to anſwer me, only once, " before ſhe bears another name, her letter " will reach me at Walſtein, where I ſhall " remain eight days, before I ſet off to " Dreſden, to viſit my ſiſter.

" I am going to depart!—And ſhall I

" never

"never ſee you more? Shall thoſe hea-
"venly hours which, by your ſide, I have
"paſſed never return? Shall I never more
"liſten to your ſweet voice?—Caroline, I
"rave; for never, while thought remains,
"will you be abſent from my imagination.
"Whatever hoſpitable, or inhoſpitable, land
"may contain my body, my ſoul will be
"ever preſent with you.

"Herewith I ſend the King's confirma-
"tion of your liberty, a letter to your fa-
"ther, one to—to your huſband, and the
"deed of conveyance of Walſtein-houſe.
"Let me know, at leaſt, that you have re-
"ceived thoſe papers; let me, once again,
"entreat you to tell me you are happy, and
"all the purpoſes of this world are ended
"with

"EDMUND AUGUSTUS WALSTEIN."

Again this dear letter is read till the cha-riot is ready, except juſt for a moment that Caroline runs into her own apartment to fetch the manuſcript of Lindorf; the picture, that principal cauſe of miſtake, is warm in her boſom. And now ſhe de-parts, entreating, conjuring the poſtillions to be expeditious, and, notwithſtanding all their endeavours to oblige ſo ſweet a petitioner,

petitioner, ſtill ſhe finds they go but ſlowly. The Count was ſome hours before her, and yet, ſo great was the diligence ſhe uſed, he had not been very long at Walſtein before ſhe arrived. Shut up in his cloſet, a prey to the moſt violent grief, inſenſible of every thing but the loſs of Caroline, whom he never was more to behold, dead even to the conſolations of virtue, he there had retired from the world, and the ſight of human being. A momentary gleam of comfort had come over him when he firſt was met by his vaſſals and ſervants. Louiſa, Juſtin, and the aged Joſſelin, had been at the head of them, had fallen and claſped the knees of their benefactor, had preſented their two little boys, and, with bleſſings and prayers, and ſmiles and tears, had given him ſalutation. Louiſa was pregnant again. "Oh! my Lord," ſaid ſhe, "your arrival is the forerunner of happineſs. I ſhall have a little girl, for which ſo often I have prayed; and now my Lord is married, if my Lady the Counteſs will but have the goodneſs to ſtand Godmother, and let my child be chriſtened after her, I ſhall never be thankful enough for the favour."

The grateful Louiſa ſpoke daggers! The Count

Count could not ſupport it.—"Alas! child, I am—I am no longer"—Walſtein was obliged to break off abruptly and fly to conceal the burſting efforts of nature.

Theſe good people ſtill were aſſembled in the court, and with them ſome of the villagers, who all were lamenting the grief in which they had ſeen their good lord, when Caroline arrived. She opened the door, ſprang from her chariot, and, without ſeeing or hearing perſon or object that ſurrounded her, exclaimed, "Where is he?—Where is the Count?"

William flew!—"Here is my Lady the Counteſs!"—

"Yes, dear William, here am I! Where is he? Lead me to him inſtantly!"

William ran before her, pointed to his maſter's cloſet door, and retired. Caroline opens it, runs, falls into his arms, and in a broken voice exclaims, "My Lord! My Huſband!—Wherefore haſt thou quitted thus thy Caroline, who adores thee, who loves thee and thee only in all the world, and whom thou wilt kill ſhouldeſt thou abandon her?"

The haſte with which ſhe ran, her eagerneſs, her ſobs, all cut ſpeech ſhort and interrupted reſpiration; her head reclined on

the ſhoulder of the Count, her arms hung round his neck, and her tears fell into his boſom. Walſtein was not leſs agitated than herſelf; at laſt, taking her in his arms and placing her on a ſopha, he falls at her feet.

"Caroline!——Caroline!——Is it you, Caroline?——Is it, or is it ſome pitying angel who has aſſumed your form? Can what I have heard be poſſible!"

"Doubt it not, doubt it not! Here, here (Caroline untied the ribband and took the portrait from her boſom) look, behold the picture I love; nay, look at it well; ſay whoſe likeneſs it is; behold who thus entirely poſſeſſes my heart, and for whom alone I would live and die!"

Walſtein looked!—with aſtoniſhment looked!—It was he!—Good God! he himſelf! At leaſt ſuch as he himſelf had been; and Caroline proved ſhe ſtill beheld him as he had been, and that, to her, he had undergone no change. True it was, indeed, that he every day became more like his portrait, and that, at preſent, the likeneſs even could not be miſtaken. But by what magic, what miracle could this portrait, of the exiſtence of which the Count himſelf was ignorant, fall into the hands of Caroline,

line, be worn next her heart, and become the object of her deareſt her tendereſt careſſes? He looks, he falters, he is ready to ſink under the exceſs, and yet cannot he believe it real! It is a heavenly dream out of which he fears to awake! Few are his words—but thoſe few all are expreſſive of rapture, aſtoniſhment, and remaining doubt. As ſoon as paſſion would permit, Caroline, bluſhing, drew from her pocket all the letters and the manuſcript which Lindorf had left her—"Take theſe," ſaid ſhe, "read, and you will know all. No more will I have any ſecrets for my Walſtein; they have already made me too wretched.—Yes, I loved Lindorf; at leaſt, I had ſenſations that bore ſome reſemblance to thoſe I feel at preſent. What the difference is you yourſelf ſhall judge. When Lindorf left me, at Rindaw, I wept; yes, wept; and not a little; but my grief ſoon found alleviation, ſoon ſubſided, and ſoon did this ſmall picture become dearer to my heart than Lindorf. This morning, on the contrary, I wept not, when I received the fearful ſentence of ſeparation. Not a tear eſcaped: but I thought either death or diſtraction muſt have been the inſtantaneous

effect, and ſhould you perſiſt in that your dreadful deſign it would be as though you were to ſay to me *Caroline, I wiſh thee dead*—But, Oh! rather ſay Caroline, I wiſh thee mine, and mine thou ever ſhalt be—Here—here is the paper! The—the Divorce! Look how inſignificant it is at preſent!"

It was torn in a thouſand pieces, and Caroline caſt it with indignation into the fire—Walſtein could not utter a word! He gazed, he wept, he took her hand, preſſed it to his lips, to his heart—He gazed again, and exclamations, without connection, without meaning, ſucceeded each other. He took up his own picture, and, in his delirium, kiſſed it with tranſport! It was the ſacred proof of the affection of his dear Caroline!

Caroline preſſed him, once more, to read the manuſcript: but this he could not: this would have been to have taken his eyes off her, and have robbed himſelf of moments the moſt precious, the moſt ecſtatic the human heart knows.—"No, dear Caroline, do not, do not aſk me to read now. I do read, I read your heart, I there find I am beloved; and what farther knowledge can I want?"

"But

"But you know not the hiſtory of the portrait." "No matter; I know it dear to you, and that is all I wiſh to know."

"Nay, but hear, at leaſt, that it was Lindorf who taught me to eſtimate the worth of Walſtein; who firſt inſpired admiration, which was afterward productive of love."

"Lindorf!"

"Yes, let me do him juſtice; to Lindorf you are indebted for the heart of your Caroline."

"To Lindorf!——Generous Friend!"

"To you he owes every thing."

"No, no, I am indebted to him for more than life."

Walſtein then took the manuſcript and read, and Caroline preſently ſaw the ſtruggling efforts of ſenſibility; often was he obliged to ſtop, and endeavoured to ſtifle his tears, and as often did he tell Caroline, with a broken and paſſionate voice, that Lindorf moſt merited her affection. Caroline, with her angel hand, ſtopped his mouth, and obliged him to continue his reading. He paſſed rapidly over events which were already familiar to his memory; but when he came to the epocha of the firſt meeting of Lindorf and Caroline,

his very ſoul ſeemed a part of the paper, each ſyllable, each phraſe was devoured, and he read with his eyes only, for circumſtances like theſe might not be read aloud. Caroline, with fixed looks, continually endeavoured to diſcover the different ſenſations by which he was agitated.

When he had ended, he gave her back the manuſcript in a manner that ſhewed how much he had been moved.—"I ſee," ſaid he, "I have a wife and a friend ſuch as never man had, and that they both have ſacrificed their own felicity to mine—Ah! wherefore, Caroline, did you oblige me to read this manuſcript? Why not leave me in that bleſſed dream into which I ſo lately had been lulled?"

"A dream? Unkind Walſtein! Is that an epithet for feelings ſuch as mine? Do you forget that this is your picture?"—The word picture, pronounced with the utmoſt affection, was convincing, and reſtored the Count all his confidence and bliſs.—"And now," ſaid ſhe, "that you have read your own ſtory, and that of Lindorf, liſten to the hiſtory of my heart."

Caroline, then, circumſtantially, related all that had paſſed from the moment of their

their marriage: the innocence with which ſhe ſuppoſed ſhe loved Lindorf as a brother, and her terror at firſt imagining a lover; the ſcene of the garden, of the pavilion, her grief, her tears, her regret, her ſtruggles, all were told. She next informed him how, induced by eſteem and admiration at reading his letters to Lindorf, ſhe had begun to think of him, to look at and love his portrait; ſpoke of what ſhe felt on receiving the letter in which he propoſed to leave his country, and of the delicacy, the ſenſations, and the mixture of chagrin that had occaſioned her anſwer. When ſhe came to the court-yard of Ronebourg, "I proteſt, I vow," ſaid ſhe, "it was agitation only at finding myſelf ſo unexpectedly in the preſence of a huſband whom I had ſo cruelly wronged, and by whom I had ſo much cauſe to be hated; it was not Lindorf. No, you long had utterly effaced every impreſſion he had made upon my heart."

The Count liſtened in rapture. He was enchanted, and took care not to give her the leaſt interruption. With what enthuſiaſm, what truth, what eloquence, what affection, did ſhe ſpeak! How did

ſhe dwell on every circumſtance of her recovery at Ronebourg, of her hopes and fears ſince their arrival at Berlin, and her continual intention of explaining her feelings; of the timidity by which ſhe was reſtrained; of her deſire to pleaſe him, to win his affection, to attach him wholly to herſelf, and make him happy; of her grief at her ill ſucceſs, her reſolution, that very morning, of ſpeaking, and her extreme affliction at finding him gone; of her deſpair at receiving the fatal packet, and of the joy that ſucceeded when ſhe was ſo fully convinced, from his letter, how dearly ſhe was beloved by her huſband. All was expreſſed with that rapidity, that perſuaſion, that paſſion, which ſo entirely remove doubt—"At preſent," added ſhe, "you are as perfectly acquainted with Caroline as ſhe is with herſelf; I have nothing more to relate, except to paint how happy I am. Oh! but how? It is wholly impoſſible! I love, am beloved, and may, without a bluſh, receive and return all the moſt endearing proofs of love! Yes, my dear Lord, our hearts are now acquainted with each other, and eſtimate mine by your own."

Walſtein would have replied, would have entered

entered into explanations concerning his own conduct, but he was interrupted by the arrival of William. He entered, ſaying that the villagers, having heard the beauteous lady they had ſeen was the Counteſs, were very unwilling to go without being permitted to ſee her again, and very earneſtly entreated ſhe would let them pay their duty to her, if it were but for a moment. Caroline, led by Walſtein, deſcended into the court, and was received with redoubled cries of *Life! Happineſs and long life, to my Lord and my Lady!*" The Count ordered wine and money to be diſtributed, and Caroline, claſping his hand moſt affectionately, whiſpered, "Theſe good people, my Walſtein, know not that they really celebrate our bridal day, the epocha of happineſs confirmed!—Would you but permit—"

"Permit, Caroline!—Speak, command."

"See what a number of young people here are. Do you not think there are ſome lovers, among them, who wiſh to marry, but whom poverty keeps aſunder? Ah! let us make them as happy as we are ourſelves!"

The Count kiſſed her hand with tranſport.—"Dear, adorable Caroline!—Let

us do ſtill more; let us perpetuate the memory of this fortunate day, ſince it is the day when Caroline is given to my arms. Let us, here, in this ſcene of bliſs, annually beſtow ſix marriage portions, and do thou, my Caroline, inform the good peaſants of the inſtitution."

Caroline again preſſed the hand of Walſtein, ſpoke to the people, and new acclamations, new benedictions were uttered with redoubled fervency: in the midſt of theſe tumultuous tranſports, the voices of young lovers were ſtill louder and more ardent than the others, and their prayers that God might for ever bleſs their good Lord and Lady reached the ſkies!

Walſtein, perceiving Louiſa and Juſtin in one corner of the court, with their little family, called, and preſented them to Caroline. "Here, my love," ſaid he, "are ſome good people with whom you are already acquainted." "Ah!" ſaid Caroline, "this is the beauteous Louiſa."—Louiſa bluſhed and became more beautiful; for, though childbearing and the duties of her ſtation had ſomewhat faded the roſes on her cheeks, ſhe ſtill was exceedingly handſome.

"Oh! yes, my Lady," ſaid Juſtin, with his

his open expreſſive countenance, which at once beſpoke the capacity of his mind and the honeſty of his heart: "You are very right; this is my beauteous Louiſa; there's not a man in the world, it's my opinion, has ſo handſome a wife, except my Lord the Count; and that is but juſt. It is the recompenſe of Heaven for having beſtowed Louiſa on the poor Juſtin."

It was now Caroline's turn to bluſh! She careſſed the two boys, who were fine little fellows, and, perceiving the pregnancy of Louiſa, prevented her petition, by offering, of her own accord, to ſtand godmother to the child. Louiſa would have knelt at her feet, if Caroline would have ſuffered her: but Juſtin nothing could reſtrain; he kiſſed the hem of her robe, and, riſing, ſaid, "Surely God loves me, for he hears and grants me all my prayers! No ſooner did I aſk him to give me Louiſa than he put it into the heart of my Lord to make her mine; and then I again begged a Louiſa for my Lord, and behold he has found one! Well then, I next will pray him to grant my Lady two little boys, as handſome as ours; nay and I have no doubt but they will ſoon be here."

Caroline turned away, ſtooped to the

children, and gave each of them a kiſs and a ducat, while Walſtein, affected, ſhook Juſtin by the hand, and threw his purſe into his hat. To eſcape thanks and prevent the efforts of gratitude, which, when beyond expreſſion, are always painful, he aſked Caroline to walk in the garden; to which ſhe inſtantly agreed. It was then the month of December, the air was piercing, the earth covered with ſnow, and the waters with froſt, yet neither froſt nor ſnow were ſeen, nor was the ſharp air felt by Caroline and Walſtein. Never did walk in ſpring appear to them ſo delicious. Long has it been known that love can embelliſh all things, and that, where the beloved object is preſent, there is neither winter nor ſummer, ſpring nor fall. Indeed, the gardens were remarkable for their beauty, extent, and the taſte with which they were diſpoſed; and, as ſuch, were viſited by travellers. Caroline had ſeen ſomething of them, on her other bridal day, and perhaps more than ſhe ſaw at preſent, though ſhe now walked all over them. At length, the Count, fearing the effect of the cold, brought her back to the Chateau. Here they found a collation ſuch as the ruſtic hoards of Louiſa could

afford. She had been buſy in providing cream, new cheeſe, cheſnuts, honeycombs, and a part of the kid that Juſtin had killed. "How fortunate it was," ſaid Louiſa, "that I had it ready dreſſed to regale our "good old father!"

"What Joſſelin!" cried Caroline; "nay then, Louiſa, you muſt go and bring him to eat with us." Louiſa ran to ſeek him, and in the Sire came, ſupported by Juſtin, and tremulous ſtill more with joy than old age. The Count and Caroline roſe, both went to him, and each taking him by an arm placed him in a great chair; after which the Count, filling him a bumper, ſaid, "Drink this, my brave Joſſelin, to the health of the happieſt of mortals!"

"And this," ſaid Juſtin, "to him who well deſerves to be the happieſt!"

Joſſelin would have ſpoken, but he was ſo much affected he could only utter parts of ſentences, and raiſe his hands and eyes to heaven. After, however, having drank a third glaſs to the health of my Lady the Counteſs, and after a long look at her, he ſuddenly exclaimed—"Bleſſed be God for having made ſo beauteous a Lady purpoſely for our good Lord! Oh yes! you are beautiful, madam, and very, very good!

I can

I can ſee, I am ſure you are; but you have an angel for a huſband! Did you know what he has done for us, how he preſerved, how he provided for, my Louiſa!"

And now the good Joſſelin, animated by wine, and having once begun to ſpeak, was not willing to be ſilent. He recounted the whole hiſtory, to Caroline, of the marriage of his daughter; and how he would not hear of Juſtin, and how my Lord the Count came round him, and how he gave them a good farm, and fifty ducats down, and how he had the misfortune to wound himſelf as he went from their houſe, and how they carried him on hurdles to the Chateau of Ronebourg; and a thouſand other *hows* which Caroline knew as well as he, yet would ſhe not interrupt him; the pleaſure the old man felt in talking was a pleaſure to Caroline; nay, ſhe even liſtened with delight to this ſimple but natural village eloquence; it flowed pure from the heart, and never thought of well-placed words or ſtudied expreſſions; and particularly to the praiſe of Walſtein which was inceſſantly repeated, and which drew the ſweeteſt tears of ſenſibility to her eyes. She looked up to this dear, this beloved huſband, and ſaw his

heart

heart in ſympathy with hers; ſhe ſtretched out her hand to him with a ſoft ſmile, an expreſſion which no words can convey. Love, virtue, and happineſs were united, and this ſingle moment would have been a large compenſation for an age of pain.

Joſſelin drank, talked, and became more and more animated. He ſpoke of his houſe, his family, the care his children took of him, of his dear Juſtin, who was the beſt of ſons, of huſbands, and of fathers. "An it were to do again," ſaid he; "I would give him my Louiſa if he were not worth a groat. Not, my Lord, that your bounty has done any harm. And then when I ſee theſe little urchins, playful, capering round me—Ah! how does it rejoice my very heart! It makes me young again; and, if my dear Cicely were ſtill living, I ſhould be happier now than ever—But, pray, my Lord, what is become of our maſter's ſon, the young Baron of Lindorf? I can remember him leſs than either of theſe. Many a time have I had him in my arms: nay, I am his nurſe father, and ſhall always love him. I was told he was going to marry the ſiſter of my Lord, and right glad we were to hear it; for ſuch honourable noble ſouls ought to marry

marry. Is it true, my Lord? Is he your brother?"

"Not yet," ſaid Caroline, riſing, and returning Louiſa's youngeſt boy to his mother, whom, till then, ſhe had held in her lap. Juſtin and Louiſa underſtood by this it was time to retire, and Louiſa hinted as much to her father; but the old man was ſo happy, in his arm chair, with the Count the Counteſs and the bottle, that he could by no means reſolve to leave them. "Let me alone, my child," ſaid he; "it is the happieſt day I ever beheld, and, at my time of life, one has not much happineſs to loſe."—"But we are troubleſome, father," ſaid Louiſa, "to my Lord the Count." "Not in the leaſt, I tell thee; thou art a fooliſh girl; I know him better than thou doſt; why it is his delight to ſee others happy; is it not, my Lord? Am not I right and is not ſhe wrong? But our children, now-a-days, will be wiſer than their fathers."

Walſtein ſmiled, and Caroline again ſat down, and made a ſign to Louiſa; while the old man, more happy than a monarch, began to ſing. He could not finiſh his ſong. "So it is," ſaid he, "I am good for nothing now; but I have a heart for

for all that. Ah! madam, if you had but heard me give the word of command! But come, ſon Juſtin, it is now thy turn. Where is thy flageolet? Play madam a tune. Louiſa ſhall ſing, and the little apes here ſhall dance. Pſhaw, what ſimpletons you are! you think of nothing: an it were not for me, here would you leave my Lord and Lady to yawn themſelves to ſleep."

Caroline having ſignified ſhe really ſhould be glad to hear Juſtin play, he took out his flageolet and played ſome allemandes, to which the little ones danced with much more grace and meaning than could have been expected, while their mother watched every motion, and the old man chuckled as he looked at the Count and Counteſs. "Did not I tell you," ſaid he, "it was worth your ſeeing? And now, Louiſa, do thou ſing the ſong thy huſband made a few days ago."

"How!" cried Caroline; "is Juſtin a poet too!"

"No, madam, no poet," ſaid Juſtin: "I only write a couplet now and then for my Louiſa." He then played a wild pleaſing melody, by way of ſymphony, on his flageolet, and Louiſa, with the timid ſimplicity

plicity and ſweetneſs of the village voice, ſung as follows.

The marriage honey-moon, they ſay,
Grown languid on the marriage day,
Now ſcarce, alas! that day outlives;
But, ah! Louiſa, thou doſt prove
How little ſuch folks know of love,
Who thus deſcribe the joys it gives!

Poor ſilly people! Wherefore tire
Of bliſs which I ſo much admire,
Taſte each returning day ſo pure;
And, feeling how I ſtill adore,
Still each returning day am more
Convinced it ever ſhall endure?

I hear of kings and mighty men,
I know no kings, and, therefore, can
No fancies form of kingly joys;
But this I know, not lands or towns,
No, I'd not give for globes or crowns
My dear Louiſa and my boys.

Louiſa ended, and Juſtin laid down his flageolet. He had ſuppoſed it poſſible that, as he himſelf loved ſo much to hear his Louiſa ſing, others might wiſh to hear her ſing likewiſe; foreſeeing therefore this occaſion, and overflowing with gratitude at the return of his Lord, while the Count and Caroline had walked into the garden, Juſtin, anxious to make this gratitude known, had compoſed the following ſtanza, which, modeſtly advancing a few ſteps, he himſelf now ſung.

Ah!

Ah! might my artleſs ſong but ſhow
How much to my kind Lord I owe;
Might I but half I feel impart;
I then, to all my former ſtore,
Should add one grateful pleaſure more,
And eaſe my now half-burſting heart.

Juſtin ſung with as much feeling as he wrote, and the Count and Caroline, affected and aſtoniſhed at his talents, gave him all the praiſe he merited. The modeſt and the ſimple Juſtin ſaid it was Louiſa who had taught him every thing, for had it not been for the pleaſure he took in pleaſing her he ſhould have known nothing. "But," ſaid Caroline, "have you compoſed this laſt ſtanza inſtantly, and without having thought on it before?"—"Not entirely," replied Juſtin; "though I do think, my Lady, I could undertake, ay and perform too, a more difficult thing for my Lord the Count."

The heart of Caroline was full, or rather overflowing. During the ſong, the good Joſſelin had fallen aſleep, but his children awaked him ſufficiently to get him away, and as ſoon as Caroline was alone with the Count ſhe gave vent to the ſweeteſt tears ſhe had ever ſhed. The old man, the happy couple, the veneration and love they all had for the Count, which extended it-

ſelf

ſelf to her, had all together ſuch an effect upon her feelings, and imagination, that her huſband appeared a ſupernatural being, a benevolent Deity, whom it was her duty to adore, and whom, in reality, adore ſhe did. As ſoon as her mind was a little calm, "Permit me, my dear Lord," ſaid ſhe, "to aſk you the ſame queſtion that Joſſe-"lin aſked ſome time ſince. Will not Lin-"dorf become our brother?"

"Would to Heaven he might!" anſwered the Count; "but you forget, my love"—

"What?"

"That it is not Matilda, now, who could make Lindorf happy."

"And why not?"

"Becauſe, for ſome months, he was in love with Caroline of Lichtfield."

"But that Caroline no longer exiſts; he will never ſee her more; in her ſtead he will find Caroline of Walſtein, who never can inſpire any thing but fraternal friend-ſhip, which cannot any way impede his love for Matilda. Let him but ſee her, once again, and he himſelf will not be able to comprehend how he might, for a mo-ment, forget her. I wiſh I were certain that Matilda's affections have undergone no change; there is a word in one of your letters

letters which gave me a little uneaſineſs. Do you ſuſpect ſhe does not love Lindorf, and that the Baron de Zaſtrow"—Walſtein ſmiled, preſſed the hand of Caroline, and interrupted her by taking out his pocket book and giving Caroline the laſt letter he had received from Matilda to read—And, Oh! how much affected was ſhe as ſhe read! How often did ſhe repeat, "Dear girl! Charming Matilda! Lovely Siſter! Yes, thou ſhalt live with us, ſhalt regain thy lover, thy brother, and the tendereſt of friends. But why," added ſhe, as ſhe returned the letter to the Count, "did not you, my Lord, immediately fly to Dreſden, to give aid and eaſe to this dear Siſter?"

"I will tell you why, my love—My Caroline was dying, and while ſhe was in danger could I leave her?"

"Well, but you anſwered Matilda's letter?"

"I did; though, at preſent, I wiſh I had not; and confeſs I begin to be uneaſy at her ſilence."

"Good Heaven! How you muſt have grieved her! Dear Matilda!"——Then, ſuddenly riſing, Caroline, with claſped hands and ardent impetuoſity, went up to th

the Count, and, with a tone of moſt earneſt ſupplication, added, "My dear, dear Lord, let me beg, let me conjure you, not to refuſe me the favour I am about to aſk. Let us depart to-morrow morning for Dreſden, to relieve Matilda; I burn to be acquainted, to live with her, to give her conſolation, and I hope happineſs. Only read her letter again, and you cannot have the leaſt heſitation. She is now, perhaps, in tears, is this moment in diſtreſs, when I am ſo happy; and I myſelf am the cauſe of her affliction! And have I, then, dear Matilda, have I robbed thee of thy lover, and deprived thee of thy brother? Oh! how many wrongs have I done thee! No, no, never, never ſhall I be truly at eaſe, till I ſee thee as bleſt as I myſelf am." Caroline ſpoke with ſo much energy, her eyes and features expreſſed ſo well her ſenſations, and ſhe herſelf was ſo beautiful, that Walſtein fell involuntarily on his knee before her, where he long remained with his lips fixed on her hand, without the power to anſwer a word—"Tell me, my Lord," added ſhe, with earneſtneſs, "ſhall we, are we to depart to-morrow?"

"Lovely, adorable Caroline!" cried the Count, "how well thou knoweſt my heart!

My

My abſence from my ſiſter, and the apprehenſion that ſhe may be unhappy, were the only things that could poſſibly interrupt my preſent felicity; but to leave you, Caroline, or to propoſe a journey in the depth of winter, and during ſuch ſevere weather, was more than I could undertake."

"Nay, my Lord, now you ſurely joke. I thought it was always fine weather when one went in ſearch of a friend in the company of a lover. We ſhall paſs through Potſdam; ſhall you ſee the King?"

"By all means, my love; it is a duty I cannot neglect; and, if I might venture, I would aſk, in my turn, whether Caroline would———" Caroline perfectly underſtood the Count, and bluſhed; ſhe had not ſeen the King ſince the day of her nuptials, which was now above a year; and, feeling how much cauſe he had to be diſſatisfied with her conduct, ſhe trembled at the thought of being preſented. While ſhe was laſt at Berlin, her mourning and her health were ſufficient pretexts to obtain delay, and the Count, we have ſeen, had his reaſons for wiſhing to indulge her in this delay. At preſent, he perceived her inquietude, and ſtopped ſhort; but ſhe immediately recovering herſelf, anſwered, with

with an enchanting ſmile, "It is high time, my Lord, is it not, I ſhould no longer remain childiſh?——Well, lead me, take me to him; I will kneel at his feet; I ſuppoſe he will ſcold me; he will do very right; for I have well deſerved his anger; but, when he has ended, I, however, will ſcold him in my turn."

"You! my angel."

"Yes, I; and very ſeverely, too, for having ſigned that dreadful paper, this morning."

Each word Caroline uttered tranſported the Count with happineſs and love, even to intoxication, diſpelling every ſhadow of remaining doubt, if doubt might remain after the frank and natural manner in which ſhe had ſpoken of Lindorf, and her deſire to ſee him and Matilda united. But, no, Walſtein had no doubts; the ingenuous and affectionate Caroline knew not diſſimulation; ſhe expreſſed her feelings too forcibly, and with a conviction that deceit cannot aſſume. Had ſhe been ſilent, indeed, her eyes, her ſmiles, the pleaſure painted in her countenance, would all have ſpoken: her lips knew not falſehood, and her features were the organs of a pure and angelic ſoul. When Caroline ſaid *I love*,

no

no proteſtations, no vows, were wanting; and this ſhe had ſaid ſo often, during the courſe of that fortunate, that bliſsful day, that the Count might well remain perſuaded of her truth.——They ſupped on the kid that Juſtin had killed ſo a-propos; for the Count, when he ſet off for this eſtate, was too deeply afflicted to think of food; and this ſimple repaſt was the moſt delicious either of them had ever made. Our hiſtory does not inform us whether long habit made the Count, as uſual, leave Caroline's apartment after ſupper; the reader muſt, therefore, ſuppoſe what he pleaſes on that ſubject: but, in the morning, Caroline made the Count promiſe they ſhould ſoon return to this charming eſtate; for, added ſhe, with a ſoftened voice and downcaſt eyes, "I ſhall love it as long as I live!"

In proportion as they drew near to Potſdam, the fears of Caroline augmented; this the Count perceived, and endeavoured to inſpire her with fortitude. He related a thouſand traits of the King's goodneſs to him, who, ſaid he, "is more than my King, he is my friend. Yes, dear Caroline, it is to my friend I am going to preſent one who will make life a continued dream

of felicity, and one whom I received from himſelf. Had you heard him yeſterday morning, how long he perſiſted to refuſe the cruel favour I came to beg, and when, at laſt, he yielded to my perſecutions and ſigned that fatal paper, had you ſeen him return it to me, you would have no fears. 'Reflect, think again, dear Walſtein,' ſaid he. 'I am truly grieved at your determination. I wiſhed to make you happy, and ſtill I think you might be ſo; it is with infinite regret I have ſigned the paper, and I ſincerely hope you will make no uſe of it.' Such, Caroline, is the monarch who ſoon is to be a witneſs of the felicity of his friend."

By this time they were in the court of the palace, and the Count, alighting, left Caroline in the carriage. The King, according to his cuſtom, was mounting his horſe to ride round the fort and exerciſe his troops. He perceived Walſtein and ſtopped——"Ah! are you there, Count?" ſaid he; "I am glad to ſee you; I thought of you all day yeſterday, and, though I ſaw the High Chamberlain, did not mention a word of what has paſſed. Do not be raſh, let me, myſelf, ſpeak to Caroline. I ſcarcely can conſent——"

"My

"My gracious Sovereign, ſhe is here!"

"Who?"

"Caroline! My wife! My lovely, my adored wife! The wife your majeſty beſtowed on me, and who is now more beloved, more dear than ever!"

"Are you in your ſenſes, Walſtein?"

"Perfectly, Sir; it was yeſterday morning that I was frantic; but Caroline has reſtored me to reaſon, life, and bliſs! She loves me, wiſhes to be mine, and once more I throw myſelf at your Majeſty's feet to beg her as the greateſt of all bleſſings your royal bounty could grant!"

Yes, the Count was kneeling to the King; who, himſelf, not perfectly underſtanding how a woman might be the cauſe of all this delirium, laughed, bade him "riſe and explain." The Count obeyed; related the deſpair of Caroline, her arrival at Walſtein, their preſent intended journey to Dreſden, for which he now aſked the King's permiſſion, and, afterwards, earneſtly entreated his Majeſty's confirmation of their union before their departure. Both were willingly granted, and the Monarch himſelf went up to Caroline, who was ſtill waiting in her carriage till the Count's return. She was a great deal affected at ſee-

ing the King approach, and would have deſcended from the coach, but the King ſaid to her, "Stay where you are, Lady Walſtein, ſtay where you are; all is well; forget what is paſt. I am ſatisfied, live happy, and let me have as many ſubjects as poſſible like yourſelves. Walſtein, make no delay, depart, return as ſoon as you can, and bring with you the lovely Matilda." His Majeſty then took the Count by the hand, ſaluted Caroline, and left them both exceedingly moved by this benevolent condeſcenſion, which Kings are ſo ſeldom diſpoſed to beſtow. They ſet off, immediately, for Berlin, made preparations for their journey, and were ſoon on their road to Dreſden, anticipating the mutual pleaſure the meeting with Matilda would occaſion. The Count foreſaw many difficulties which might ariſe from his aunt and young De Zaſtrow, but was determined to overcome them all, and bring Matilda to Berlin. He concealed his fears from Caroline, whoſe hopes ran high and happineſs was great, in thinking ſhe ſhould gain a ſiſter and a friend. We have before related how deſirous ſhe was of a bleſſing ſo neceſſary and ſo precious; and to have the ſiſter of Walſtein for this friend, with whom

whom ſhe might converſe, while he was abſent, of all her paſt and preſent feelings, certain of being heard with an intereſt almoſt equal to her own, was to double this bleſſing.

To love is not ſufficient; friendſhip, to whom love may unboſom itſelf, is alſo neceſſary; and Caroline, already, felt the delicious tranſports of telling Matilda how dearly ſhe loved her brother. In this their impatience, for the Count was as deſirous as Caroline of being at Dreſden, they travelled the two firſt days with all poſſible ſpeed, making no ſtay, by day, except to change horſes, and at night only taking two or three hours repoſe. But the ſtrength of Caroline by no means equalled her wiſhes, and the ſecond evening ſhe found herſelf ſo fatigued ſhe was obliged, when they came to a ſmall village, to entreat the Count would go no farther that night. Walſtein, it may well be ſuppoſed, readily conſented; but, ſuſpecting the accommodations would not be very good, he ſent a ſervant before to procure a bed. At laſt, they were met, at the end of the village, by the ſervant, with the landlord of a ſmall, indifferent inn. Our hoſt, judging, by the attendants, his gueſts were great peo-

ple, and fearing to loſe the promiſed harveſt, came himſelf, to make it the more ſecure. He had only two bed-chambers, each with two beds, and both theſe were in the poſſeſſion of a young gentleman and his lady, who had arrived the evening before. The huſband had a wound in his arm, which, by the motion of the carriage, had been opened; and this was likely to detain him ſome days longer; for which reaſon, to make certain of the two chambers, he had paid for them before-hand. This, however, did not much embarraſs our hoſt, who was a merry, unpoliſhed, country fellow.

"I warrant me," ſaid he, "they will let you have one of the chambers, for what occaſion have they for two? They are ſo loving, and ſo handſome, that they are never aſunder all day; and why may they not as well be together all night? No, no; they will not be vexed at that."

The hoſt kept talking till they came to the inn, but the Count, however, thought it neceſſary to go himſelf, and entreat the ſtrangers to ſuffer the Counteſs to lie in one of the beds. Meanwhile the hoſteſs ſhewed Caroline into her own chamber. The Count went up a dark ſtair-caſe and

wanted

wanted the landlord to introduce him; but he, little uſed to the forms of good breeding, led him into a kind of entry, at the far end of which was a door open, and, telling the Count he would find them there, left him to introduce himſelf.

Walſtein advanced, and ſaw a young lady at the farther part of the chamber, elegantly dreſſed, and tying a black ſcarf round the neck of a young gentleman, ſo as to ſupport his arm. As her white and charming hand paſſed his cheek he employed his other arm to ſeize and kiſs it with rapture. The picture was intereſting, and the Count durſt not diſturb the young couple, whom he ſilently beheld, remembering his own happineſs. Fearing to be thought rude, after ſtanding a moment, he was going to retire; but the young lady, happening to look towards the door, ſaw him, gazed for a moment, flew to him with open arms, and, with aſtoniſhment in her countenance, exclaimed, "It is my brother! my dear dear brother!"

Lindorf (Yes! it was Lindorf himſelf!) forgot his wound, and inſtantly roſe—— "Heavens! Is it poſſible! Can it be Walſtein?"——Walſtein it was, and Lindorf preſſed him to his boſom; while Matilda,

hanging round his neck, kiſſed and kiſſed, and knew not whether to weep or dance for joy.

Need we ſay the Count was aſtoniſhed?—Matilda and Lindorf! His ſiſter and his friend both in his arms! Had his ſenſes refuſed belief his heart would have convinced him it was truth; and, though unable to comprehend by what miracle he might find two ſuch people in ſuch a place, he, nevertheleſs, yielded to all the tranſport the prodigy inſpired. For ſome time, Lindorf! Matilda! Brother! Siſter! Friend! Interjections, and exclamations only were uttered, only were heard—The Count added the name of Caroline, and, at length, ſaid, "She is here, dear Matilda, here, with me, let us go to her."

"Here! Caroline here! My ſiſter here!" cried Matilda.

Light and ſwift as the young greyhound at his returning maſter's voice, Matilda flies down ſtairs and already is in the arms of Caroline, who, preſently, knew her; more indeed from her affectionate careſſes, and the repeated epithet of "dear dear ſiſter," than from the portrait of Lindorf. The gentlemen followed, and the ſurpriſe of Caroline increaſed; but ſurpriſe and pleaſure

pleaſure of the pureſt nature were her only ſenſations. Lindorf is her brother, and her friend, and ſhe heſitates not to kiſs him with that frank and natural tenderneſs by which true and ſimple friendſhip ſo well is characterized. "And may I, then, call you brother!" ſaid ſhe; "may I tell you I love you! Oh! yes, I know not how much I ſhall love the huſband of my dear Matilda, and the friend of my dear, dear, dear Walſtein!"

This open ingenuous manner would have taught Lindorf, had he himſelf been inſenſible of, his duty. He certainly feared to meet Caroline: the ſcenes that had ſo lately paſſed could not be totally obliterated from his imagination; but the manner in which ſhe received him, the tone of voice in which ſhe uttered thoſe few words, in the preſence of Walſtein and Matilda, wholly deprived him of all dread, either of himſelf or her. He was ſurpriſed to find that the redoubted Caroline was no more than the wife of his friend and the ſiſter of Matilda; and for whom he felt no ſenſations beyond theſe tranquil and legitimate bounds—"Yes," anſwered he, with fortitude and enthuſiaſm, "yes, Caroline, I am your brother, your friend, the

friend of Walſtein, and I feel myſelf worthy of theſe titles, which are become ſo dear, ſo ineſtimable!" Then, ſeizing the hand of Matilda——"Dear Count," ſaid he, "you invited me to return, and promiſed me happineſs. Here, as the ultimate happineſs to which I aſpire, let me receive this hand, which once was promiſed me from my Walſtein, I think my future life will prove I know its value."

The Count was not long in conſidering an anſwer, and his reply was accompanied with an earneſt wiſh to hear what ſtrange circumſtances had united them; if they were yet married; what had occaſioned the wound of Lindorf; where they were going, whence they came; and, in fine, the full explanation of what, at preſent, ſeemed ſo wholly enigmatical. We are not without our hopes that the reader, in ſome degree, participates the Count's curioſity; and that he now imagines himſelf in the ruſtic chamber of a ruſtic inn, in company with four perſons, the moſt happy the earth contained, feeling all that love and ſweet friendſhip can feel, ſeated round an antique chimney, ſpeaking all at once, and each aſking a thouſand queſtions without yet waiting for a ſingle reply.

And

And now behold the lovely Matilda weeping and laughing both at once, kiſſing her brother, embracing Caroline, holding out one hand to her dear Lindorf, and then, ſuddenly, with a mighty grave face, and ſerious tone, commanding ſilence! "Yes, ſilence! For one full quarter of an hour, I impoſe ſilence on you all," ſaid ſhe, ſeating herſelf erect; "for, I aſſure you, I am not a little vain of having a ſtory to relate. It is almoſt as ſingular, ſaid ſhe, to her brother, as the fine tales you uſed to tell me when I was a very little, little girl."—Silence being thus obtained, and the eyes of the reſt fixed on Matilda, ſhe, addreſſing herſelf to the Count, thus began:

"There was a bird-catcher——"

"A bird-catcher!" exclaimed they all at once.

"Yes, a bird-catcher," replied ſhe, with great gravity. "Before I begin my hiſtory I firſt intend to relate a little fable and put a queſtion to my brother. Do not be impatient, I ſhall ſoon have done—There was once a bird-catcher who, by his tricks and artifices, enticed a poor little bird into his nets. Ah! how wretched was that poor little bird! How did it beat its wings

in its confinement, and call all its friends to its aſſiſtance! But the bird-catcher took care not one of them ſhould hear its cries. At laſt came a linnet, and flew round the net in which it was entangled. 'Poor little bird,' ſaid the linnet, 'thou wouldeſt lament ſtill louder if thou kneweſt all the miſchief that awaits thee. To-morrow they will clip thy wings, for ever deprive thee of thy liberty, ſhut thee up in a cage with a bird thou doſt not love, and forever prevent thy meeting the mate thou haſt left at freedom in the groves.' Then did the little bird, at hearing this, cry ſtill louder; and the linnet was ſo moved that it ſaid, 'Let us try if there are no means to ſave thee.' Whereupon they both began to peck at the threads of the net, and, crack, by and by, one of them was broken; ſo that the little bird got firſt its head out, next one of its wings, at laſt both, ſpread them, vaulted aloft in air, and flew, right joyous, again to find its friends and former happineſs.

"And now tell me, dear brother, whether was the bird-catcher, who thus tried to deprive the poor little bird of its liberty, or the poor little bird, that endeavoured to regain this liberty, wrong?"

"The

"The bird-catcher, my dear girl," cried the Count, enchanted at the art, ſimplicity, and grace ſhe had mingled in her apologue. "The charming little bird will never be wrong if it appeals to me; for I am certain my heart will approve what even my reaſon may condemn."

Matilda, inſtantly, claſped the neck of Walſtein, and with tears of joy exclaimed, "I have found my brother; he is ſtill the ſame, ever benevolent and ever good, and I no longer dread either his reproaches or my own. Surely, I did right in quitting thoſe malicious people who made me doubt his friendſhip."

"Doubt my friendſhip! Dear Matilda, let me beg you to explain your meaning." "Yes," continued ſhe, with vivacity, "they have had the cruelty to ſay, nay even to prove, you no longer loved me, wrote to me no longer, and would ſee me no more: that you forbad me to think of Lindorf, commanded me to marry the Baron De Zaſtrow, had departed for Ruſſia, and, in fact, that I had no longer any brother, for it was the ſame thing."

Matilda could not proceed, and the tears ran down her lovely roſy cheeks; yet, while ſhe wept ſhe ſmiled: it was a ſummer

mer ſhower which refreſhens nature and inſpires new pleaſure.

"What a child am I!" ſaid ſhe; "I knew it was all falſe; I enjoy your company, here you are, you love me, and yet you ſee the ſuppoſition makes me weep: but no, I will laugh; and now—there, now will I relate the full and whole hiſtory of the poor little bird."

Before ſhe began, the Count aſked ſeveral queſtions concerning what they had told her againſt him, and found his aunt had intercepted and concealed the letter in which he had promiſed his ſiſter ſoon to come to Dreſden, and ſet her free. She managed ſo as to make Matilda believe the Count had written to her, his aunt. His wiſh that ſhe might marry the Baron De Zaſtrow was changed into a poſitive command, and the voyage of Lindorf into England was a love affair, and a project of marriage with an Engliſh lady. The letter of the Count, inſtead of Ronebourg, was dated at Peterſburg; and the innocent Matilda, being ſhewn her brother's handwriting, was the dupe of all theſe artifices. The arrival of the Count, it is true, would ſoon undeceive her; but they hoped to have Matilda married before that happened,

pened, and ſince the Count had wiſhed, he certainly would eaſily be brought to pardon, the marriage.

Had Matilda been of a leſs determined character her aunt would, no doubt, have obtained her end; but ſhe found an oppoſition, a fortitude which nothing could ſhake. It ſeemed inconceivable to young De Zaſtrow; for never, till then, had he ſuppoſed it poſſible to reſiſt the elegance, the graces, and the charms he had acquired in his travels. A year's reſidence at Paris, his acquaintance with certain noble and faſhionable gameſters there, and his ſucceſs with actreſſes, who had made moſt heavy demands on his purſe, had ſo fully convinced him of his irreſiſtible merit, that he had imagined nothing more was neceſſary, in order to conquer, than to appear. To his aunt he left the care of courtſhip, and thought Matilda had every right to yield when he had declared, upon his honour, ſhe was as handſome as an angel; that her ſhape was quite charming; that there was ſomething of a French caſt in her countenance; that ſhe was almoſt as deſirable as Mademoiſelle du Thé, of the Opera-houſe; that ſhe ſung nearly as well as Mademoiſelle du Gazon, of the *Theâtre Italien*;

Italien; and that, when ſhe was his wife, he would incontinently take her to Paris, where there was no doubt but ſhe would *ſtrike*. All which he ſaid looking at himſelf in the glaſs, admiring his leg, diſplaying the brilliant on his finger, and, occaſionally, interrupting himſelf to expatiate on the merits of certain faſhionable baubles he had brought from France.

"Such," ſaid Matilda, "is the being with whom my aunt is ſo enraptured; to whom ſhe was determined to marry me; and of whoſe perſon, wit, and paſſion, ſhe was continually vaunting. I own that, for my part, I could ſee nothing but a very fair complexioned, very mincing, very delicate, very vain, very ſelf-ſufficient young gentleman; who loved only one perſon in the whole world, himſelf, and who only did me the honour to think of me becauſe I was the ſiſter of the King's favourite, and the heireſs of Madam de Zaſtrow. I by no means endeavoured to conceal my thoughts, concerning either him or Lindorf, from my aunt; ſhe well knew I diſliked the one as much as I loved the other, and her whole endeavour was to make me reverſe this manner of thinking.—"You ſee," ſaid ſhe, "your brother has changed his

his opinion."—"Yes, madam," anſwered I, "but his opinion has not changed my heart."—"Your Lindorf no longer loves you."—"And muſt I puniſh myſelf for his infidelity?"—"You will never ſee him again."—"I may love him, nevertheleſs, and keep my promiſe."—"But his inconſtancy releaſes you."—"Not in the leaſt; his inconſtancy releaſes himſelf, but if I am not inconſtant is that my fault? Or can he, or you, or I myſelf, or any other being in the world, make me forget to love him and teach me to love another?" (What did Lindorf feel as thus Matilda ſpoke!)

"Theſe converſations uſually ended in ill-humour. I was, by turns, ſcolded, careſſed, flattered and menaced: and, notwithſtanding all my firmneſs, was almoſt driven to deſpair. At length, I determined to write; not to you, brother, for I ſuppoſed you ſtill in Ruſſia, and they might have married me again and again before I could receive your anſwer; beſide I was ſomewhat piqued at your neglect and ſilence; therefore, I ſay, once more, not to you, but—to Lindorf I wrote."

"To Lindorf! In England! How did you know his addreſs?"

"Know? I knew not, perfectly, if he were

were there; for I ſometimes would flatter myſelf they had been telling me falſehoods; though many circumſtances led me to think he was, and I wrote. Writing was a momentary eaſe and conſolation, and, though my letter remained in my pocket-book after it was written, I ſtill imagined myſelf leſs unhappy. I had ſome ſmall hopes of diſcovering if Lindorf really were in England, and, perhaps, of remitting him this letter, and you ſhall hear on what theſe hopes were founded.

"When I arrived at Dreſden, Mademoiſelle de Manteul, an amiable girl, but ſomewhat older than I, had been exceedingly polite to me, and the intimacy of the family at my aunt's occaſioned me to ſee her often. She long had loſt her mother, and lived with an old gouty father and younger brother; therefore, enjoyed a liberty which rendered her houſe and acquaintance exceedingly agreeable, and ſhe was, continually, either with me or inviting me to viſit her.

"Flattered by the friendſhip of a young lady of five-and-twenty, I returned her politeneſs, and we became as familiar as circumſtances would permit. Somewhat timid, on account of the difference of our age,

age, which ſhe, however, endeavoured to make me forget, I, though moſt deſirous of a confidante, durſt not tell her the ſecret of my heart. She had a kind of—of forwardneſs in her manner, owing to her education, and was, likewiſe, moſt intimate with my aunt, to whom ſhe aſſiduouſly paid her court; beſide which ſhe had an evident partiality in favour of the Baron de Zaſtrow, ſo that I feared making an additional enemy, inſtead of a friend. I could with much greater eaſe have confided my thoughts to her brother, whoſe age was nearer my own, and whoſe mild and manly character might render him more indulgent; but he, alſo, was the friend of the young Baron, and, indeed, rather ſeemed to avoid than to ſeek being alone with me, and it was not long before he informed us he was going to travel for ſome years.

"Oh! how did my heart palpitate when I heard England was to be the firſt country he viſited! How then did I wiſh to tell him my ſecret, entreat him to ſeek out Lindorf, and conjure him to take charge of my letter! But no opportunity could I find. He was too buſy in preparing for his departure, and ſeemed ſorrowful at being obliged to leave Dreſden and his family.

mily. I ſeldom ſaw him, and, when I did, found myſelf abaſhed. If ever I approached, with intent to ſpeak of his voyage to England, and to add a word relative to what lay neareſt to my heart, I trembled, knew not what to ſay, and remained ſilent; bluſhing as if I had ſpoken, or as if the world had read my thoughts. Mademoiſelle de Manteul was generally a third perſon, and, ſeeing my embarraſſment, increaſed it by her pleaſantries.

"At length, this brother departed, while I ſtill was ſeeking the means to induce him to take my letter and give it to Lindorf; and I was left in the utmoſt deſpair at having miſſed ſo favourable an opportunity.

"One reſource ſtill remained; my friend might ſend it to her brother. But then it was neceſſary to make a full confeſſion, and intereſt her in the ſucceſs of my paſſion. The better to lead to this I continually ſpoke of England, her brother, the letters ſhe would receive from him, and the dear pleaſure of having a correſpondence with a perſon one loves, though I yet had not dared to pronounce the name of Lindorf. She came to me one morning, and threw a letter into my lap. "There," ſaid ſhe;

"you

"you who think it ſo ſweet a pleaſure to receive letters; I make you a preſent of that, which, indeed, ought to have been addreſſed to you; for my brother, though he has written to me, has ſpoken only of you."

"Of me!"

"Yes, of you, little witch. You are the cauſe of his abſence, you have robbed me of my brother; read, read, and return it quickly."

"Nothing of what this meant could I comprehend; but, beginning to read, was ſoon better inſtructed. The poor youth had ſpoken to his ſiſter of ſentiments which I neither ſuſpected nor could return, and for which I was much afflicted, and, therefore, would not have read beyond the firſt page. But, Oh! what a pleaſure was I about to deprive myſelf of! My friend obliged me to go on, and I turned over with vexation and ſorrow. Scarcely had I caſt my eyes on this ſecond page before I ſaw, at the bottom, a name!—a name!—Oh! how inſtantly did grief give way to pleaſure, to joys the moſt ecſtatic! It was the name ſo dear to my heart, ſo ever preſent to my thoughts; yes, it was the name of

of Lindorf; *the Baron of Lindorf, Captain of the Guards.*

"No deception is there; it is he, he himſelf, and already have I read every ſyllable, have uttered a hundred exclamations, have preſſed the letter to my lips, to my boſom, and have wept and laughed as if I had had no witneſs of my raptures, folly, and phrenſy. Looking up, however, and ſeeing the aſtoniſhed air of Mademoiſelle de Manteul, I ran into her arms, and hid my emotion in her boſom. Gently raiſing, ſhe aſked me what it meant. "Matilda!" ſaid ſhe, "my dear Matilda! Why are you thus overjoyed? What is it that thus can agitate you?"

"Ah! read, read—read yourſelf," ſaid I, pointing to a certain paſſage in the letter; "this will be my explanation;" and while ſhe read, again I hid my face in her boſom.

"I have had the happineſs," ſaid M. de Manteul to his ſiſter, "to meet with the "Baron of Lindorf, at Hamburg, a cap-"tain of the Pruſſian guards, and hope "we ſhall become intimate friends.—— "We have been ſhipmates together, and "lodge in the ſame houſe. We are ſeldom

"aſunder,

"aſunder, our tempers and diſpoſitions "accord wonderfully, for he, like me, is "melancholy, apt to be abſent, and re-"grets his country. Without being his "confidant, I dare pronounce his heart is "not more free than mine."

"Ah! exclaimed I, raiſing my head and joining my hands, "it is not true, then, that he loves an Engliſh lady, or that he has been ſix months married! My heart told me it was not!"

"But who, who are you ſpeaking of? Do you know this Baron of Lindorf?"

"Do I know him!"

"Ay, do you know him? Do you love him?"

"Love him! Better than life! Beyond all thought!"

"And thus, from queſtion to queſtion, Mademoiſelle de Manteul became the confidante of all my ſecrets, and fully informed of my ſituation. I related your friendſhip, my dear brother, with Lindorf, and your deſire to ſee us united; but, as one muſt always reſerve a little of one's wealth for one's ſelf, I did not tell her that you had changed your opinion; though I let her know my doubts and fears concerning Lindorf, which her ſilence ſeemed

to

to confirm. Yet was it poſſible, and I endeavoured to perſuade myſelf it was true, that the difficulty of conveying his letters to me was the reaſon why I received none. My brother was no longer in his intereſt; he, no doubt, knew it, and that *melancholy*, that *abſent air*, his *regrets for his country*, and his *enſlaved heart*, had each made its impreſſion, and reanimated all my hopes.

"My friend had liſtened with an evident concern, and, when I had ended, affectionately kiſſing me, ſaid, "My poor, dear Matilda, why did you not tell me all this ſooner? How great would have been the pleaſure of the confidence you have refuſed me!"

"I feared leſt you ſhould take the part of young de Zaſtrow."

"Me! Oh, no!—So far from that I perfectly approve your reſiſtance, and am only afraid leſt you ſhould yield at laſt."

"Never! Never!—While I live, never will I love man but Lindorf!"

"Add, alſo, none other you ought to love; for, in reality, you are as much betrothed as if actually married, and to eſpouſe another would be guilt, perjury."

"It would, it would!"

"But what is Lindorf doing in England?"

"Alas!

"Alas! I know not; cannot comprehend. I have not heard from him theſe ſix months!"

"And why do you not write?"

"I have written."

"And where is your letter?"

"In my pocket-book."

"Mademoiſelle de Manteul burſt into a laugh. "It muſt produce wonderful effects," ſaid ſhe, "while it remains there. Oh! what a child you are! Give me your letter, and your lover ſhall have it in a week."—How did I kiſs Mademoiſelle de Manteul!—And yet her brother's love of me ſomewhat damped my joy; though I admired his ſiſter's goodneſs, thus to ſacrifice his intereſts to mine. I was even fearful of abuſing it, and ſhewed ſome heſitation.—"The taſk," ſaid ſhe, "I own, is a little cruel; but we muſt cure him, and this I think will be an infallible means. Give me the letter."—And ſoon the letter was taken from my pocket-book and in her hand: It was ſealed.—"You poſitively promiſe, my friend," ſaid ſhe, as ſhe received it, "to be only Lindorf's; never to marry de Zaſtrow."

"Poſitively! Poſitively!"

"Very well, that will ſet my conſcience

at eaſe; for I now ſhall be ſerving a perſecuted, married pair. Leave the management of every thing to me. We muſt gain time till you can receive an anſwer, and take care to leave me with the young Baron, as often as poſſible. I will flatter and coax him, and thus relieve you from the pain of practiſing deceit."

"Oh! I cannot deceive. I have always told him, and always ſhall tell him, I will love none but Lindorf."

"And what is his anſwer?"

"That he has no faith in eternal conſtancy."

"He has not! I underſtand him. But we will prove what women are capable of; ſhall we not, my dear Matilda?"

"I moſt ſincerely promiſed we would, and left her, more than ever determined on unſhaken conſtancy and reſiſtance."

Walſtein, here, ſmiled; and whiſpered ſomething to Lindorf, which the latter returned with like ſignificance. The ladies, and eſpecially Matilda, deſired to know what they ſaid.—"Oh! I promiſe you, you ſhall know by and by; but go on, my dear girl, with your ſtory. You were telling us of the tender friendſhip of Mademoiſelle de Manteul."—"I was," replied

replied Matilda, with ardour; "and never, perhaps, was friendſhip like hers; as you would have ſaid, had you heard her ſpeak, ſeen her eagerneſs, and her zeal. You would have ſuppoſed the ſecret hers, and that her happineſs, not mine, was at ſtake. Every means did ſhe take to increaſe my fortitude. I might, perhaps, have ſuſpected myſelf; but my friend was five-and-twenty, was therefore prudent, and, certainly, would not give me ill counſel. Determined, therefore, with all poſſible obſtinacy, not to yield, I waited, but not with dread, for the anſwer of Lindorf; perſuaded he would tell me truth, and, if I found I was no longer beloved, my reſolution was taken."

"Why, what would you have done?" ſaid Caroline, with vivacity.

"Every thing I could to have forgotten him; but, at the ſame time, have kept the vow I made, never to marry, never to truſt a perfidious ſex, capable of loving twice."

This was very innocently ſaid, but it was a dagger to the feeling heart of Caroline. She bluſhed exceſſively, caſt her fine eyes on the ground, half looked up at Walſtein, and, as inſtantly, again,

looked down. He ſaw her charming confuſion, enjoyed it for a moment, tenderly kiſſed her hand, then, addreſſing himſelf to Lindorf, ſaid, "You, my friend, no doubt, approve Matilda's mode of thinking, and, perhaps, you are right; but each perſon has his opinion. I think nothing can be more flattering than to be the ſecond object of the attachment of a delicate and tender heart; and I ſhould think this attachment more durable, and more certain, than that of a heart that never had occaſion to ſuſpect and be aware of itſelf."

"How!" exclaimed Matilda; "does my brother Walſtein preach inconſtancy?"

"I do not think a ſecond paſſion deſerves the name, and I only admit of being twice in love."

"Ah! No oftener?"

"No, certainly; no oftener," ſaid Caroline, faintly, and preſſing the hand of Walſtein to her boſom.

"Well, for my part," replied Matilda, "I find the firſt time once too often, and that women are very ſilly creatures ever to love, ſince love has ſo many pangs for them and ſo few for the men. Here was this good gentleman amuſing himſelf, in all

all tranquillity, at London, while I was ſcolded, perſecuted, and deſpairing from morning till night——(Lindorf with a look petitioned mercy; Matilda ſmiled and continued.)—I found myſelf, however, much leſs unhappy ſince I had gained a friend, to whom I might tell all my griefs; and this friend was ſo kind, underſtood ſo well all my feelings, approved ſo highly of my love and conſtancy, and ſpoke ſo well of Lindorf, and ſo ill of de Zaſtrow, that my obligations were infinite. Nay, ſhe was even complaiſant enough to admit his viſits and endure his converſations, for whole hours, to ſerve me, and adviſed me to invite him to come on thoſe evenings I was to viſit her. "That will be the means of amuſing him and not expoſing yourſelf," ſaid ſhe; "and, likewiſe, of pleaſing your aunt. I promiſe never to leave you; for, indeed, there is nothing I would not do to ſerve you."

'My aunt now became very good-humoured, teaſed me no more, and I hoped, thus, to gain time; but it is now three days ſince ſhe brought me two large ſheets of paper, commanded me to read them, ſign which I pleaſed, and left me in utter aſtoniſhment. They ſeemed like

two large contracts! And was I then permitted to chooſe between Lindorf and de Zaſtrow? Such for a moment were my hopes; but I ſoon ſaw they both related to the odious de Zaſtrow, whom I hated more and more. One of them was what I had ſuſpected, a marriage contract with him, to which nothing was wanting but my ſignature, and by which I was made heireſs to my aunt. The other was a deed of conveyance of this inheritance to the Baron de Zaſtrow, ſhould I refuſe to ſign the firſt. Oh! how happy was I thus to be left to my choice! How inſtantly did I ſign the conveyance, and run with it, joyouſly ſkipping, into my aunt's apartment! Her nephew was with her. "There, there, there!" ſaid I; "it is done; I have ſigned it, moſt willingly." Young de Zaſtrow, as vain and ſelf-ſufficient as ever, had not the leaſt doubt but it was the marriage contract, and, kneeling, returned me a thouſand thanks for my condeſcenſion. "I am quite delighted, Sir," ſaid I, laughing, "to ſee you ſo pleaſed, though, really, you owe me no thanks, I not having the leaſt merit, for I have only followed my own inclinations."

"His tranſports now redoubled, and I

was

was malicious enough to repeat, with great ſolemnity, "Yes, ſir, I aſſure you I have wholly followed my inclination—to remain free—beſide, my aunt has a right to beſtow her benefactions where ſhe pleaſes; nor have I ever wiſhed to enjoy wealth which ſeems to be put in competition with the greateſt of earthly bleſſings, the right of beſtowing my heart and hand."

"Imagine the look and manner of de Zaſtrow as he roſe—My aunt ſaw which paper it was I had ſigned, and her eyes ſpoke her feelings; but, before ſhe had time to give them utterance, I fell, and, kiſſing her hands again and again, ſaid, "My dear, dear aunt, do not be angry; every thing is well as it is; neither mention marriage nor an inheritance which I never deſired, nor ever once thought of; only let this contract be deſtroyed; (as I ſaid this I tore it in a thouſand pieces) leave the deed of gift in the poſſeſſion of my couſin de Zaſtrow; men have more occaſion for riches than we have, and I covet nothing but your friendſhip, the friendſhip of my brother, and the love of Lindorf, or, at leaſt, the liberty of loving him all my life. The Baron de Zaſtrow will find many women who will be proud

to be diſtinguiſhed by him, and who will not be in love with Lindorf; who, therefore, might afford him that happineſs I cannot; and, when you ſhould ſee your poor Matilda lying dead of a broken heart, who, then, could reſtore her to you?"

"I thought my aunt ſeemed affected and was about to yield to my entreaties; for ſhe tenderly raiſed me, preſſed my hand, and, turning towards de Zaſtrow, ſaid, "You hear her, nephew, what do you think?"—De Zaſtrow was ſtriding furiouſly about the chamber. "Think, madam," anſwered he, with a tragic terror in his voice and features, "I cannot think. Death or Matilda muſt be mine!" At the ſame moment he drew his ſword; yes, I aſſure you, he drew his ſword, and ſeemed determined to kill himſelf. I ſprang to him and ſeized his arm; my aunt cried out like a perſon expiring, and ſaid ſhe was *very very ill!* I knew not which of them to attend, nor could I calm either, till I promiſed to do every thing they pleaſed; while I myſelf was ſo much agitated, and terrified, that I ſcarcely could utter theſe few words, which, however, produced an aſtoniſhing effect. The ſword was in its ſcabbard again, my aunt came

came to herſelf, kiſſed me, careſſed me, and earneſtly begged me immediately to ſign.

"Luckily for me, however, I had prevented all ſigning for that night; as the torn contract, ſcattered about the floor, informed them. It was, therefore, deferred till the morrow; but they required me to renew my promiſe. The moment my terror was gone, I ſhuddered at what had paſſed, and at the engagement I had entered into without knowing what I did; and when I was deſired to confirm this engagement I was ſo much affected that I fainted away. They were obliged to carry me into my chamber, and lay me on a bed; the motion ſomewhat brought me to myſelf, for, though I could not ſpeak, I heard what they were ſaying. They thought me ſtill in a fit, and my aunt ſaid to the Baron, "Do not be alarmed, nephew, this will ſoon be over; we have terrified her a little too much, but the greateſt difficulty is conquered, ſhe has promiſed; to-morrow ſhe ſhall ſign, the next day you ſhall marry her, and her brother may then ſay what he pleaſes. At preſent we muſt leave her undiſturbed"—After which they quit-

ted the chamber, recommending me to the care of my woman.

" Oh! what infinite matter was here for reflection, when I came perfectly to myſelf; which this contributed to effect! I conſidered and reconſidered every word, nor was there one that did not give either ſurpriſe, anger, fear, grief, and even joy. I preſently diſmiſſed my attendant—*We have terrified her a little too much!* repeated I. And ſo they have been playing a ſcene, in which I have been the dupe of the comedy! A trick, concerted between my aunt and this ſelf-killing couſin, to obtain my conſent!—I deſpiſed the artifice, and, from that moment, held myſelf free; yet I ſhrunk back with horror when I recollected *She has promiſed; to morrow ſhe ſhall ſign, and the next day you ſhall marry her*—" No; I will die firſt," repeated I. What followed gave me a ray of hope. *Her brother may then ſay what he pleaſes —— We ſhall no longer fear him.* " So they ſtand in awe of this dear brother, then, whom I thought in the intereſt of my perſecutors, but he is not! They have deceived me in that too; and I ſtill have a protector, a friend, who will not forſake me."—Alas! in my joy of having again this friend, this good brother,

ther, I forgot how far diſtant we were, and that the next day my fate was to be determined.

"I remained thus, agitated by a thouſand different thoughts, when Mademoiſelle de Manteul entered. The moment I ſaw her, I held out my arms, and, weeping, exclaimed, 'Oh! come, come to the aſſiſtance of your wretched friend!' Yet little did I imagine all her friendſhip was capable of performing! She was as pale, trembling, and affected as I myſelf—"I know every thing," ſaid ſhe; "I have juſt left your aunt. What have you done, Matilda? You have promiſed to marry de Zaſtrow."

"He was going to kill himſelf."

"Kill himſelf, ſilly girl! Men are not ſo ready to kill themſelves. But what do you mean? Do you intend to keep this fatal promiſe? Do you recollect all thoſe you have made to Lindorf?"

"Ah! can you think I have forgot them?" paſſionately, anſwered I. "No; they are all engraved on my heart, and ere they are effaced they ſhall tear that heart from my boſom! Yet, what am I to do? How may I free myſelf from this deteſted marriage? Speak, tell me, dear friend; can you imagine any means of delay till I

write to my brother, till he can return and protect me? For, from what I have juſt heard, that I now am ſure he will. Oh! if he were not in Ruſſia, I know what I would do."

"Why, what would you do?" ſaid Mademoiſelle de Manteul, who ſeemed deep in thought; "what would you do?"

"I would eſcape; fly to him for ſafety."

"And have you the courage?" ſaid ſhe. "How I admire you, my young friend! This is, in reality, the ſole means left. I myſelf thought of it, but durſt not make the propoſition."

"Alas!" anſwered I, "the thing is impoſſible; my brother is in Ruſſia. I never ſhall find the means of going thither."

"I own it is difficult; but have not you a maternal uncle in London?"

"I have; my Lord Seymour."

"Suppoſe you were to put yourſelf under his protection?"

"What! fly to England and Lindorf there! Can you imagine———"

"No; I ſhould not have imagined that would have been a reaſon to avoid England."

"Ah! my dear friend," ſaid I, ſhaking my head, "if you have no other propoſal but

but this to offer I am undone. Rather would I go to Ruſſia, impoſſible as it is, and ſeek an aſylum from my brother, than to act with ſuch imprudence. I ſpoke this with ſo firm a tone that ſhe offered no reply, but aſked me what it was *I juſt had heard*. I then repeated my aunt's converſation; and, ſuddenly interrupting me, ſhe exclaimed, "If they have deceived you in one reſpect they may have in another, and, it is my firm opinion, your brother is not in Ruſſia, for I recollect to have heard ſomething as well as you——I will go immediately to your aunt, and, if I am not miſtaken, preſently diſcover the truth. We then ſhall know what we have to do."

"She went, and it was not long before ſhe returned. Pleaſure ſparkled in her eyes. "I was right in my conjecture," ſaid ſhe, as ſhe entered; "they have impoſed upon you; your brother is at Berlin, married to a lovely lady; his letters have been intercepted, he is ſoon coming to Dreſden, but they are determined to marry you, with or without your conſent, before his arrival. To-morrow you will be forced to ſign the contract: nay, they will even guide your hand, if you will not ſign it willingly, and the day following you are to be married.

All

All this has your aunt told me in ſecrecy. "My niece has promiſed," ſaid ſhe, "and ſhe ſhall keep her promiſe."

"Oh! my God! my God!" cried I, "what ſhall I do? And you tell me theſe things with apparent pleaſure."

"Why, I really thought it would pleaſe you to hear your brother is at Berlin, and that you may, if you pleaſe, free yourſelf from their tyranny."

"Perhaps I might—but—"

"But——What, and is all your courage gone ſo ſuddenly?—Ah! poor Matilda! I perceive you never will have the reſolution to remain firm. Lindorf has got your letter, is returning, or, perhaps, returned; and what will he ſay when he ſhall find you are married?"

"Cruel friend!" replied I, with chagrin; "is this your conſolation?"

"What would you have me ſay to a feeble and timid child, who does not know her own mind? Thoſe evils we want the fortitude to rid ourſelves of we muſt endure; and I can aſſure that, in two days, if you are at Dreſden, you will be the Baroneſs de Zaſtrow."

"Never, never," anſwered I, with enthuſiaſm—"Never ſhall that hated name be

be mine. I will prove that this feeble and timid child has more reſolution than you ſuſpect; nay, has enough to face even death itſelf."

"Die! pſhaw! Who would die, when they may live, and live happily?"

"I ſee no means; it is impoſſible. I cannot go by myſelf to Berlin. I ſhould loſe myſelf a thouſand times; neither ſhould I ever have the ſtrength to get thither."

"Mademoiſelle de Manteul could not forbear laughing.—"Poor girl! And ſo you thought I meant to ſend you to Berlin, alone, and on foot, a fugitive heroine, in diſguiſe, no doubt, with a bundle in your hand, and a large ſtraw hat tied under your chin, beneath which ſhould be diſcovered a certain dignified and noble air, which ſome piteous ſtage-coachman perceiving ſhould give you a place on the box. This, no doubt, would be vaſtly clever and intereſting, but the way I mean to propoſe is much leſs dangerous and more ſimple. One of my former maids is married to the poſt-maſter of the city. She is entirely devoted to me, and her huſband will not only furniſh a chaiſe and horſes but drive you himſelf; will accompany you till you get

ſafe to your brother, and, if you pleaſe, you may now eſcape, and wait at their houſe till you ſet off. You have your choice to do this or marry de Zaſtrow; for there is no alternative; you muſt determine for the marriage or the elopement; and, if you let the moment ſlip, it will be impoſſible for me to ſerve you."

"My choice is made," ſaid I, inſtantly, "and, ſure, I am moſt fortunate in a friend I will fly to my brother, who will protect me for my Lindorf——And yet it is a great crime to deceive my aunt."

"Your aunt thinks it none to deceive you, moſt unworthily."

"But ſuppoſe I were to try, once more, to move her once more———"

"Your trial would be vain. Tears, prayers, perſecutions, and even faintings, are expected, which, far from being moved at, they perhaps will profit by."

"I will be gone," cried I; "neither ſcruples nor remorſe ſhall ſtay me. I am ſhamefully treated, and I have no longer any other inquietude than that which the fear of eſcaping in ſafety gives."

"Nothing is eaſier. Take my gown, cloak, and veil; they will ſuppoſe it me, and leave me to follow you. Wait for me

me at our houſe, I will preſently be with you."

"Mademoiſelle de Manteul is not very ſcrupulous," ſaid the Count, ſmiling. "You cannot imagine half her zeal," continued Matilda. "I myſelf was incapable of either acting or thinking; but ſhe, in a moment, got every thing ready, helped me to put on my diſguiſe, opened the door, kiſſed me, puſhed me forwards, and ſaid, "Go, go, dear Matilda; you have not a moment to loſe: they may be coming here the next minute, perhaps; fly, or farewell all hope." Fear gave me courage, and I had got to the bottom of the ſtaircaſe when I recollected I ought to write a note, and leave it on my table, for my aunt; that ſhe might be certain, at leaſt, I was not dead. I returned, and Mademoiſelle de Manteul, terrified at ſeeing me, thought I had met ſome one on the ſtairs. Scarcely had I begun to tell her what brought me back before ſhe interrupted me. "You are mad," ſaid ſhe: "Write a letter! Give your aunt time to come and catch you! She told me ſhe was coming up preſently——Begone, begone! They are not ſo eaſily to be perſuaded people are going to kill themſelves as you are!"

"The

"The fear of being caught made me compliant, and I got out without being perceived. I had not far to go, nor was it long before my friend came to me. "We have a whole hour to take our meaſures in," ſaid ſhe; "they think you are aſleep, and I adviſed them to leave you in peace, at preſent. The firſt thing you have to do, therefore, is to go to the poſt-houſe; for, ſhould they find you abſent, they will come to ſeek you here immediately. You will there remain in ſafety. If you want any money I can aſſiſt you."

"Thanks to your goodneſs, my brother, I did not want this kind of aſſiſtance. My friend, therefore, went with me to the miſtreſs of the poſt-houſe, who conſented to every thing ſhe propoſed, and with whom ſhe left me. It was very probable they would come to ſeek me at the houſe of Mademoiſelle de Manteul, and, therefore, neceſſary ſhe ſhould be at home to avoid ſuſpicion.

"No ſooner was I alone than I began to be deeply affected at the terror of my aunt, when ſhe found me gone and was wholly ignorant what was become of me. Diſobedience and flight were ſufficient offences, and needed not aggravation. I, therefore,

therefore, reſolved to repair them, as far as was in my power, and, having called for pen, ink, and paper, wrote nearly thus:

"I have juſt been informed, my dear "aunt, my brother is at Berlin, and am "ſo impatient to ſee him that I have gone "without aſking a permiſſion which, in "all probability, would have been refuſed, "and have thus ſpared myſelf the regret "of a denial and again being diſobedient. "I am already ſufficiently afflicted for "having diſpleaſed you by my reſiſtance "to your will. Ah! why, my dear aunt, "have you forced me thus to diſpleaſe, "thus to refuſe compliance, thus to fly "from you? How happy ſhould I have "been could I have contributed to your "felicity! The Baron de Zaſtrow muſt "have ſufficient delicacy to feel that a pro-"miſe, extorted by terror and diſowned by "the heart, is not binding. I hope he "will no more think of killing himſelf, "for I am no longer there to catch his "arm; I would earneſtly adviſe him to "live, and, above all, to live happy with-"out Matilda."

"I gave this note in charge to one of the landlady's children, and bade him deliver it to the porter, without ſaying who it came from.

from. More at eaſe, now I thought my aunt would be ſo too, I waited with tolerable patience for Mademoiſelle de Manteul, who had promiſed to ſee me again before I ſet off, and who, at length, came.

"You have not a moment to loſe," ſaid ſhe, "you muſt depart at day-break; the Baron is ſearching you through every houſe in town; he has juſt left ours, and I encouraged him to continue his ſearch, which will give you time to get the ſtart. It was exceedingly lucky you did not write, as your ſilly whim would have made you."—I durſt not confeſs I juſt had wrote, but I now felt my imprudence, and the fear of being purſued was ſo ſtrong that I was unwilling to go. My friend employed all her eloquence to encourage me; ſhe deſcribed the anger of my aunt, the neceſſity I ſhould be under of confeſſing where I had been, and who had aſſiſted me, the aſcendant which my elopement and return would give her over me; told me there would be no poſſibility of appeaſing but by obeying her, and that, if ever I entered her houſe again, ſhe was certain I ſhould be married within two hours—"I will go," ſaid I; "I will go inſtantly: the die is caſt, and, be the event what it will, I will go;" and accordingly

cordingly orders to get the chaiſe and horſes ready were immediately given. Mademoiſelle de Manteul, fearing I again ſhould relapſe, would not leave me. She was under no apprehenſions about her father, whoſe gout kept him at home; ſhe ſent him word that ſhe ſhould ſup out, and remained with me till the moment of departure. Of de Zaſtrow, of my brother, of Lindorf, of every thing that might encourage me to keep my reſolution, ſhe ſpoke. "Depend on me," ſaid ſhe; "I will go, in the morning, to de Zaſtrow, and lead him to ſuſpect you are flown to England. He ſhall not eaſily get away from me, and by that time you will be ſo far on the way to Berlin that all purſuit will be in vain." This gave me a little confidence; or, rather, it was now too late to liſten to fear. To recede was no longer poſſible, and I beheld the moment of departure arrive with pleaſure. Unable to expreſs my gratitude, except by my kiſſes and tears, while my friend was enraptured to ſee me, as ſhe ſaid, eſcape ſo many dangers, I got into the chaiſe and——"

"Alone!" interrupted the Count.

"No; the miſtreſs of the houſe, who is now with me, and who, formerly, as I ſaid, had

had ſerved Mademoiſelle de Manteul, whoſe huſband conducted us——"

"But where is Lindorf?" replied the Count, again ſtopping her ſhort. "It ſeems that Mademoiſelle de Manteul, not he, has carried you off."

"And did you think it was Lindorf?"

"I own, I am glad to find it was not; though there ſeems ſomething incomprehenſible in all this!"

"A little patience, brother, and you will not hereafter judge of your Matilda from appearances.

"And now, behold me in the poſt-chaiſe, with the good Marianne, for that is her name; eſcorted by her huſband, on horſeback, ſtopping only to change horſes, toſſing ducats into the poſtillions' hats, and taking each buſh for the Baron de Zaſtrow. My companion did all ſhe could to inſpire courage. Mademoiſelle de Manteul was her oracle, and ſhe, every minute, repeated "there was nothing to fear, for Mademoiſelle had told her ſo." Theſe aſſurances made me more tranquil; and, having travelled the firſt day without interruption, I thought myſelf in perfect ſafety. Juſt, however, as we came yeſterday to the poſt-houſe I, very imprudently, put my head out

out of the carriage, and preſently heard a voice, I thought I knew, cry, "It is ſhe! It is ſhe herſelf! Poſtillion! Stop! On your life ſtop!" And I preſently ſaw young de Zaſtrow, at the ſide of the chaiſe, with a thouſand menaces in his countenance."

"De Zaſtrow!" cried the Count and Caroline.

"Yes; De Zaſtrow, and without the help of witchcraft. What, you ſuppoſe ſome malicious fairy has winged him through the air? Nay, to ſay the truth, I ſuppoſed ſo myſelf, at firſt; but, alas! I ſoon found this good for nothing fairy was neither more nor leſs than my own imprudence. The note I had written had indicated the road I ſhould take, and the Baron had not loſt his time in further ſearch at Dreſden. He ſuppoſed I had, no doubt, written it in the carriage, and that, by ſetting off immediately, he ſhould eaſily overtake and bring me back; and this ſuppoſition made him depart two or three hours before me. I imagined myſelf purſued while, on the contrary, I was full ſpeed purſuing, and, unfortunately enough, overtook him at his poſt-houſe, where he was waiting for horſes. How great muſt have been

been the ſurpriſe of my dear friend, Mademoiſelle de Manteul, when ſhe found, in the morning, he was gone! And how exceſſive her inquietude and fears for me! At preſent, however, I hope ſhe is eaſier."

"Yes, yes," ſaid the Count, ſmiling, "ſhe is eaſy enough, never fear. But go on with your ſtory, it is quite romantic."

"Romantic, indeed! I aſſure you, I think it a very extraordinary ſtory! But we are not half at the end of it yet—Let me ſee—The terror, fright and conſternation, at the ſight of de Zaſtrow. Yes, yes; I was there—Well, then, I ſhrieked, and hid myſelf in the corner of the chaiſe, while Marianne ſcreamed to the poſtillion to go on; de Zaſtrow threatened and bad him ſtop, his ſervants came up, and the crowd increaſed. Something muſt be done, and I thought it beſt to ſpeak to the Baron, to aſk him by what right he interrupted me, or pretended to deprive me of my liberty, and to tell him, openly, I would rather die than either marry him or return to Dreſden. Accordingly I again looked out of the chaiſe, and there I ſaw—!

"Now, if you pleaſe, you may talk of witchcraft, fairies, and romances! any thing, or every thing, you can ſuppoſe miraculous

raculous and inconceivable; for there did I ſee—Lindorf! Yes, Lindorf himſelf; who, inſtead of in England, was there, beſide the chaiſe, as much aſtoniſhed as myſelf—Matilda!—Lindorf!—Theſe exclamations were mutual and inſtantaneous, and I really believed heaven had ſent him to my ſuccour; therefore, leaping out of the chaiſe—

"I cannot go on," ſaid Matilda, "you muſt finiſh the ſtory, Lindorf; you know the remainder better than I do." Then, with her head reclined on the ſhoulder of Caroline, ſhe whiſpered, "I hope he will not tell how I ſprang into his arms and claſped him in mine with all my ſtrength."

"Aye, aye, let me conjure thee, dear Lindorf, to go on," ſaid the Count, impatiently; "prithee, explain by what ſtrange chance thou cameſt, juſt at the preciſe moment, on the Dreſden road, and in company with the Baron de Zaſtrow."

"I had returned," ſaid Lindorf, "to anſwer, in perſon, the charming, the tender letter I had received at London. My being there at this moment was accidental, but I was not in company with the Baron de Zaſtrow. It was chance, or, rather, my guardian genius that brought me to

the poſt-houſe juſt then. I was unacquainted with the Baron, but I ſaw a young man of quality, impatient to obtain horſes, and quite furious becauſe none were to be found. He enquired, at the ſame time, if a young lady, whom he endeavoured to deſcribe, had not lately paſſed that road. They anſwered, No, and he again began to ſwear it was falſe, ſhe muſt have paſſed; and again to beſtow his curſes on the poſtillions and the poſt-maſter. As ſoon as I alighted from my chaiſe, for I was going to Dreſden, he came up, and ſaid, "You, certainly, Sir, muſt have met a young lady, alone, very handſome, driving full ſpeed!"

"No, Sir, I aſſure you, I met no ſuch lady; nor, indeed, any lady that I remember."

"This is very extraordinary!" ſaid he, ſtamping—"Perhaps the note was a new trick!—Excuſe me, Sir, for queſtioning you ſo abruptly. I am purſuing a woman I adore, who promiſed me her hand yeſterday, was to have married me to-day, and who eloped laſt night!"

"The misfortune is the greater," anſwered I, "Sir, becauſe you do not ſeem that kind of perſon the ladies would fly."

My

My compliment ſeemed to pleaſe him, and acquired me his entire confidence. He bowed, and with much ſelf ſufficiency, which he endeavoured to render modeſt, replied, "I own, Sir, it is not the firſt time I have been told ſo; and there have been ladies who have gone farther than telling; but you ſee how different taſtes are; and, certainly, that of women is very often very capricious. Is it not quite extraordinary that ſhe I am purſuing is yet not eighteen; and that, notwithſtanding, ſhe has a whim of romantic fidelity for a lover who has forſaken her, and whom ſhe will never ſee again? I am unacquainted with him, but ſhould ſuppoſe perſonal accompliſhments not infinitely in his favour; and, as to birth and fortune, in theſe I yield to no man."

"All this, Sir, I make no doubt, is true; but if your rival has the advantage of being beloved—"

"Beloved or not beloved," ſaid he, "it is equal to me; he is abſent, will ſee her no more; if I can overtake her ſhe is mine, and ſhall be obliged to adore me."

"This converſation paſſed before the poſt-houſe, and I was amazed at the facility with which this indiſcreet and vain young man

ſpoke to a ſtranger, as well as at his total want of delicacy, and ſilently approved the fugitive lady. Juſt then a chaiſe came up, full gallop, from Dreſden, and interrupted us. He did not ſeem to have the leaſt ſuſpicion, and looked towards it from mere curioſity, till, the chaiſe ſtopping, a lady looked out. I had but a glimpſe, and did not know it was Matilda, but my gentleman, inſtantly, exclaimed, "It is ſhe! It is ſhe!" While the lady drew back, exclaiming, in her turn, "It is he!" The maid bid the poſtillion drive on, while de Zaſtrow, with uplifted cane, threatened to knock him off his horſe if he moved a ſtep. I heſitated for a moment, what part I ſhould take. The frankneſs of the youth had, in ſome meaſure, laid me under an obligation; and yet I felt myſelf affected for the unfortunate lady, whom they were going to marry againſt her conſent. My firſt intention was to become a mediator, if poſſible, and to inſpire the terrified lady with fortitude, for which purpoſe I approached the chaiſe, far from imagining how deeply I myſelf was intereſted in this adventure. As I came up I heard my own name repeated in an accent of amazement! The door opened, and out flew Matilda,

Matilda, whom I inſtantly knew, notwithſtanding the finiſhed beauty, alteration, and growth, of her perſon! The charming Matilda placed herſelf by my ſide, took me by the hand, and ſaid, in a voice which terror and joy had rendered faint, "Dear, dear Lindorf! God has ſurely ſent you to the aſſiſtance and defence of your Matilda! They want to rob you of her, but they never never ſhall! She will be yours, and yours only!"

"No ſooner did the Baron hear my name than, throwing away his cane, drawing his ſword, and arrogantly advancing, he exclaimed, "Lindorf! What treachery is this?" Then addreſſing himſelf to Matilda, ſaid, "I entreat, Mademoiſelle, you will go into my poſt-chaiſe. I have the poſitive commands of your aunt to bring you back to Dreſden, and I dare ſay the Baron of Lindorf will not think proper to oppoſe thoſe commands."

"That we ſhall preſently ſee, Sir," anſwered I coldly, while I ſupported Matilda, whom ſo many contending paſſions had occaſioned to faint in my arms. I gently carried her into the poſt-houſe and laid her on the firſt bed I found; then, recommending her to the perſons preſent, telling

them they ſhould be anſwerable for her forthcoming, I immediately left her, and went in ſearch of the Baron de Zaſtrow. I found him demanding entrance, and forcibly withheld by two or three men, who let him go the moment I appeared. We walked together to ſome diſtance, and went into an encloſed garden. "You have accuſed me of treachery, ſir," ſaid I, "and appearances may give ſome ſmall juſtification to the ſuſpicion; but I aſſure you, on my honour, that chance, only, a moſt lucky one it is true, has brought me here. When I ſpoke to you, I was ignorant both that you were my rival and that Matilda had fled. If you think this ſufficient ſatisfaction, and will leave the young Counteſs of Walſtein abſolute miſtreſs of herſelf, I promiſe you to abide by her deciſion, and here offer you my future friendſhip and eſteem; if not, I will defend my own pretenſions and her liberty at the hazard of my life."

"Defend them, then, traitor," replied he, attacking me with ſo much impetuoſity that, being off my guard, I received a wound in the left arm. It was not dangerous, and only rouſed my anger; and the Baron took ſo little care, thinking himſelf certain

certain of victory, when he ſaw me wounded, that I eaſily diſarmed him. His ſword flew out of his hand and, as it fell, I ſet my foot on it—"Your life," ſaid I, "is now in my power; I am wounded and you are not: but, diſregarding this ſmall diſadvantage, I am ready to reſtore your ſword, and, again, put it to the chance of victory, if you do not renounce your pretenſions to Matilda, and promiſe to depart for Dreſden, immediately, without ſeeing her."

"He heſitated, and I ſaw, by the change of his countenance, my manner of acting had made ſome impreſſion. Pride ſtill ſtruggled, but honour, at laſt, was conqueror, and he preſented his hand. "Recollect," ſaid he, "ſir, you have, on theſe conditions, offered your eſteem and friendſhip. I feel, at preſent, I ſhall be proud of and will, therefore, endeavour to merit them, by prevailing on my aunt to confirm that happineſs which is juſtly your due. Forget the paſt, and make my peace with Matilda. I pretend only to her friendſhip; though," added he, with a mixture of former ſelf-ſufficiency, "I am not accuſtomed to diſdain; nor do I know by what faſcination I ſo long have ſupported hers." I embraced him, ſaid ſhe would

certainly be the laſt cruel beauty he would find, and that, had not her heart been pre-engaged, ſhe could not poſſibly have reſiſted ſo many accompliſhments and ſo much merit; after which we parted the beſt friends in the world.

"As ſoon as I ſaw him get into his chaiſe, I haſtened to Matilda, concerning whom I was very uneaſy. Her fainting, however, was moſt happily timed, ſince it deprived her of the knowledge of a tranſaction that might have occaſioned dreadful terrors. She began to recover and, looking round her, aſked where ſhe was, as I entered; then, reſuming all her accuſtomed grace, "Dear Lindorf," ſaid ſhe, "and is it not a dream? Is it true that I have once more found thee, and that we never ſhall forſake each other again?"

Scarcely had Lindorf finiſhed his phraſe ere he felt the white hand of Matilda upon his mouth.—"Fie, fie, young gentleman," ſaid ſhe, "I ſee no occaſion to repeat all that paſſed ſo literally. My dear brother, and my dear, dear ſiſter, do not believe a word he ſays. For, what if I had thought all that, can you ſuppoſe I would have ſpoken my thoughts? And, even, if I did, you know I was fainting. Who can tell what

what they do after ſo ſtrange a meeting, preſſed by one lover, protected by another, and amongſt rencounters and battles, and all this hurly burly? One may be allowed to be a little extravagant and ſilly, on ſuch occaſions; but, at preſent, I aſſure you, I am as prudent as"—Matilda ſmiled, with malicious pleaſure, on Lindorf; then, ſuddenly claſping his hand, added, "Well then, I ſay again and again, every thing I ſaid yeſterday! And I hope we ſhall never forſake each other more!"

Matilda was ſo charming, as ſhe ſaid this, and there was ſuch a mixture of rapture, pleaſantry, and confuſion in her countenance, that Lindorf imagined he loved her dearer than ever he had loved woman, and expreſſed himſelf with ſo much enthuſiaſm and fire that every body thought the ſame. Caroline was tranſported, ſhe kiſſed the Count, and ſaid, "Was I wrong when I told you how dearly he would love her?" Walſtein beheld Lindorf with aſtoniſhment, nor yet could comprehend, perfectly, all he heard and ſaw. To reaſon and friendſhip he had attributed the attachment of Lindorf to Matilda; for well he recollected to what exceſs he had adored Caroline; nor could imagine

how a paſſion ſo energetic might ſo ſoon change its object. Yet was there every appearance of ſincerity in his manner, and words; and Lindorf was no hypocrite. Beſide, the Count was ſo accuſtomed to read his thoughts that, had he been under any real conſtraint, it could not have eſcaped him, and he could obſerve nothing but ſincerity. Lindorf, on his part, gueſſed what was paſſing in the mind of the Count, and whiſpered, "When we are alone, dear Walſtein, you ſhall hear my ſtory, and your ſurpriſe will then not be ſo great. In the mean time, do not imagine your friend has acquired a facility at feigning; or that he does not feel all he expreſſes." The Count claſped his hand, and entreated Matilda to finiſh her ſtory. There was not much to ſay, but the leaſt circumſtance was intereſting to the Count and Caroline. Matilda replied, "You forget, brother, that Lindorf is the hiſtorian, at preſent"—Lindorf thus continued:

"I found a village ſurgeon to dreſs my wound, and hoped I might have concealed it from Matilda, as well as my conteſt with the Baron. I, therefore, only told her he had liſtened to reaſon, departed for Dreſden, and promiſed to appeaſe his aunt.

She

She was moſt happy at the intelligence, and, being equally impatient to ſee our friend and brother, we preſently departed. The motion of the carriage, and, perhaps, the emotion of my heart, ſoon diſturbed my wound, and Matilda was greatly agitated when ſhe ſaw the blood. It was impoſſible any longer to conceal the cauſe, and we were obliged to ſtop here to dreſs it again. It was found deeper than had been imagined, and I was condemned to take four-and-twenty hours repoſe. In vain did I ſolicit my lovely partner to continue her journey, and leave me in this wretched inn; no entreaties could gain conſent."

"No, to be ſure," interrupted Matilda, with vivacity. "I know my duty better. Who ever heard of a heroine of romance abandoning her wounded knight, who had defended her againſt a ferocious raviſher? I even thought it neceſſary, according to cuſtom, to dreſs that wound myſelf, and bathe it with my tears. Did not I, Lindorf? And I hope you will own I tied the ſcarf with tolerable grace. Were not my attitude and manner affecting, brother?"

"The very picture of a princeſs of the age of Amadis."

"No; one of the miſtreſſes of the famous Galaor," ſaid ſhe, glancing at Lindorf.

"It was the miſtreſs, then, that fixed the rover," replied he, kiſſing her hand.

"So ſaid Galaor to every miſtreſs, and they believed him; but I," continued Matilda, "am not ſo credulous, and mean to put your ſincerity to the proof—In thoſe times, a woman, with vaſt *ſang froid*, commanded her lover not to pronounce a ſingle word for two years, and he obeyed. Oh! happy age! I, though I only ſhall impoſe reſt and ſilence on my wounded hero till to-morrow, am certain to find him diſobedient!"

"Never, never," ſaid Lindorf kneeling; "and there will be ſome merit in my ſubmiſſion, for I have many things to tell my Walſtein."

"And ſo you would have paſſed a whole night in chattering, mean while the fever and the wound—I reiterate my abſolute command!—Silence and reſt till to-morrow!"

Exact obedience was promiſed, though not without reluctance. The friends were both impatient to communicate their ſentiments; and, particularly, the Count, who

was

was doubly intereſted to find the heart of Lindorf cured of paſſion for Caroline, and capable of making Matilda happy. It was, therefore, agreed that, in recompenſe for this their ſilence, they ſhould travel, on the morrow, in the chaiſe of Lindorf, and leave the coach of the Count to the ladies. This arrangement was equally acceptable to Caroline, who was herſelf moſt deſirous the friends ſhould mutually explain their feelings, that Walſtein might be convinced of the exact truth of all ſhe had told him, and inform Lindorf of her preſent love for her huſband. Matilda, perhaps, might have preferred the care of her wounded knight; but Matilda dared not ſay ſo; and her brother having mentioned ſending his ſervant to Dreſden, with letters for his aunt, ſhe alſo retired to write, both to her and Mademoiſelle de Manteul, to whom ſhe ſent back the ſervants and chaiſe.

She preſently returned with her two letters. The Count read that to Madam de Zaſtrow, approved it, added a few lines from himſelf, and, perceiving Matilda concealed the one ſhe had written to Mademoiſelle de Manteul, ſaid, ſmiling, "I ſuppoſe you expreſs your gratitude in ſtrong terms to your zealous friend."

"I ex-

"I expreſs it as I feel it; and, I think, that is ſaying a great deal. You, who are one of the heroes of friendſhip, ought, certainly, to be delighted to find ſuch an inſtance of its effects; eſpecially in a woman."——The Count continued to ſmile. ——"And pray now, what is the meaning of that ironic air? What, you are incredulous?—Siſter Caroline, I hope you will take the part of the ſex."

"We will both take its part," anſwered Caroline, "and prove how capable women are of friendſhip."

"I never doubted it," replied Walſtein; "nay, I even believe that pure diſintereſted friendſhip is leſs rare among women than it is ſuppoſed. It is a ſenſation wholly accordant to their gentle and tender nature; but you will forgive me for not imagining Mademoiſelle de Manteul one of its models."

"Brother!—After ſo many proofs!"

"I am almoſt ſorry, dear Matilda, to rob you of that happy credulity which ſo well proves the innocence of your heart; but, I muſt own, I have ſtrong doubts concerning thoſe proofs. Mademoiſelle de Manteul appeared greatly affected; but was it for you or for herſelf? Was it to

ſerve

ſerve a friend or to get rid of a rival? Every circumſtance, I think, beſpeaks the latter."

Matilda was confounded. A thouſand little incidents were recollected, and a thouſand others ruſhed forward to prove her brother was right; yet could ſhe not inſtantly give her up, and replied, with vivacity, "Surely you muſt be deceived, ſhe diſlikes, nay, deteſts the Baron; ſhe was always ſpeaking ill of and turning him to ridicule."

"Right, right; to augment your repugnance. This is the very cauſe why I ſay ſhe is not a true friend. Had Mademoiſelle de Manteul, the victim of an involuntary paſſion, opened her heart to you, and given you ſecret for ſecret; had you together concerted the means of avoiding a marriage that muſt render you both unhappy, I ſhould have faith in her friendſhip, and even be far from blaming her; but all this artifice at her age is odious: ſhe only had herſelf in view by prompting you to an imprudent ſtep, which the event has juſtified, but which might have been your deſtruction."

Lindorf, here, took up the ſubject.—"You are too ſevere, dear Walſtein; be the motives of Mademoiſelle de Manteul what

what they may, ſhe has ſerved me ſo eſſentially that it becomes me to undertake her juſtification, and I ſee nothing in all this but artifice which may well be permitted to love; beſides, while ſhe was ſerving herſelf, ſhe was, alſo, ſaving her friend from inevitable misfortune."

"No doubt," ſaid Matilda, who took courage at ſeeing herſelf ſupported; "for, one day longer, and I had been forced to marry that odious Baron."

"And do you not perceive, my dear girl, that, I being on the road, one day longer and you had been for ever freed from tyranny, without that violence which is ever prejudicial to a young lady's reputation, and without offence to an aunt to whoſe cares you are certainly much indebted? Your only error, dear Matilda, was that of ſuſpecting my friendſhip; of ſuppoſing, for an inſtant, I could abandon you; and of blindly confiding in an imprudent young lady, though, I own, ſhe is rather to blame than you."

"Dear, dear brother," cried Matilda, all in tears, and running into his arms; "pardon us both. Ah! how do I reproach myſelf for having mentioned, for having given you an ill opinion of her! But ſo

far

far was I from ſuſpecting it, that I ſuppoſed you would admire her conduct and her zeal."

Lindorf joined Matilda, and chid his friend for his ſeverity. Caroline claſped Matilda to her boſom, and, while ſhe dried her tears, wept in concert——"Think not I wiſh ill to Mademoiſelle de Manteul," ſaid the Count, exceedingly affected. "No, to her I owe the happineſs of beholding thoſe I love united. So freely do I pardon her, that I ſincerely hope ſhe may marry de Zaſtrow, and will even ſpeak in her behalf to my aunt. And now, Matilda, do thou pardon me for having afflicted thee, and undeceived thee. It will be a leſſen to thee, my dear, and the laſt I ſhall ever give thee; for, from this moment, I commit thy conduct, and thy felicity to Lindorf. Thou knoweſt how ardently I have deſired to ſee thee his. Oh! Caroline, Oh! my ſiſter, Oh! my friend, ſcarcely can my heart contain its joys, the ſweet ſenſations this happy moment brings!"

Matilda a thouſand times thanked her brother for his ſincerity, and for the inſtruction it contained; "though," ſaid ſhe, "I ſcarcely can repent my imprudence, ſince

ſince it has made us all happy a day ſooner;" and added that ſhe would, in a poſtſcript, let Mademoiſelle de Manteul pleaſantly underſtand that, at preſent, ſhe was acquainted with her motives.——The Count was not at all deceived in his conjectures, for Mademoiſelle de Manteul had been ſolely prompted by her paſſion for the young Baron de Zaſtrow, who had paid her ſome attentions before he went on his travels, and who, ſhe hoped, would have married her on his return. The arrival of Matilda at Dreſden, the wiſhes of her aunt, the attachment of the young Baron to the amiable ſpouſe deſtined him, all repelled hopes which the confidence of Matilda once more animated. She had only ſought her friendſhip to have an opportunity of ſeeing the Baron revive his former ſentiments, diſcover thoſe of Matilda, and, if poſſible, turn them towards ſome other object. At firſt ſhe had had her brother in view, and, therefore, had ſhewn Matilda his letter; but her joy was exceſſive when ſhe learned this lover already exiſted, and that her young rival was determined on the moſt peremptory reſiſtance. This it was her advantage to encourage all in her power; but this alone was not ſufficient; the beſt

means

means of obtaining her own end, ſhe ſuppoſed, would be to remove Matilda from Dreſden. This might beſt be done by engaging her to take ſome ſtep which ſhould abſolutely break off the intended match. She it was who perſuaded Madam de Zaſtrow, and her nephew, that, by terrifying Matilda, they might obtain her conſent; and what the conſequence of this terror and the ſucceſs of her ſchemes were has already been ſeen. Yet was ſhe but little benefited by her artifice, for the young Baron, recognizing, in the poſt-chaiſe, the former maid of Mademoiſelle de Manteul, and being convinced ſhe had favoured Matilda's flight, was irritated at the perfidious trick that had been played him. But this perfidy was the conſequence of affection! and when the vanity of man is flattered he is generally indulgent.

Return we to our happy travellers. The wound of Lindorf healed apace, ſo excellent a balſamic is happineſs, and they ſet off for Berlin; Caroline and Matilda in one of the carriages, and the two friends in the other. Leave we theſe lovely ladies to ſpeak of thoſe they held moſt dear, to congratulate each other, to form plans of future delight, and to vow eternal friendſhip.

ſhip. Leave we them frequently to look out of the carriage after the poſt-chaiſe that followed, wiſhing impatiently to arrive, and let us examine how Walſtein and Lindorf paſſed their time.

They partook of the impatience we have mentioned; but man feels not ſo ſenſibly thoſe ſhort privations which are ſubjects of ſuch real uneaſineſs to the tender heart of woman. Perhaps, on great occaſions, the former may be more ardent, more paſſionate, more capable of riſking every thing for the object of their love; but the daily proofs, the intervening fears, and all the ſhades of a delicate and conſtant paſſion, are much more peculiar to women; few men are ſuſceptible of them, nay, few know their value. Our travellers, indeed, had not time to think of them; yet had they been in the chaiſe ſome time without entering into any converſation. They ſat ſilent, for Lindorf knew not where to begin, or what to ſay to the huſband of Caroline, and the Count feared leſt the moſt trifling queſtion might bear the aſpect of reproach: he, however, was the firſt to ſpeak, and told his friend how much he had been afflicted by reading the manuſcript he had left with Caroline. "I have not the leaſt

fear

fear or ſcruple," ſaid he, "in confiding the happineſs of a ſiſter to the man to whom I am ſo infinitely indebted, and who, loving and beloved by the moſt angelic woman the world contains, could not only ſacrifice his own paſſion, but endeavoured to inſpire her with the love of another. Ah! dear Lindorf," ſaid he, "while to you I owe the heart of Caroline and the felicity of Matilda, is it poſſible I ever can acquit myſelf of the wondrous debt? Yet, ſpeak, explain how this ſudden revolution in your affections, which yet I underſtand not, has happened. Is not all you teſtify for my ſiſter another ſacrifice of generous friendſhip? Endeavour not to impoſe upon yourſelf. Can Caroline——"

"Dear Walſtein," interrupted Lindorf, inſtantly, "I would utter oaths if I did not know the word of your friend were ſufficient. Believe that friend, then, when he aſſures you he is worthy of becoming your brother; and that nothing has he expreſſed that he has not felt. I love Caroline, no doubt, but it is as I love her huſband, with friendſhip as pure and ſtrong as it is durable; but I love my dear Matilda as the ſole woman on earth who now can make me happy—You are ſurpriſed, but

hear

hear what I have to ſay. Learn what has paſſed in the heart you yourſelf have formed ſince laſt we parted."

The Count was moſt deſirous to hear, and ſat attentive while Lindorf thus continued:

"Since you have read my manuſcript, Walſtein, you are informed of my firſt acquaintance with Caroline, and what were the ſentiments ſhe inſpired. I ſhall attempt no juſtification of myſelf. You can judge whether it be poſſible to ſee her with indifference. I proteſt, however, before heaven, that notwithſtanding all her beauty, all her charms, ſhe would have been totally indifferent to me had I had the leaſt ſuſpicion ſhe was your wife. But this how might I have? You were ſilent; Caroline, then ſo young, bore not your name, and the good Canoneſs gave evident marks of wiſhing to ſee us united. Every circumſtance told me ſhe was free and that I might dare to love her——Oh! wherefore, my friend, that fatal reſerve!——Yet let us paſs this over. Ignorant in my guilt, I offended the man for whom I would willingly have ſacrificed my life; he has ſeen ſome faint picture of my grief, my remorſe, and the reſolution I took, the inſtant I diſ-

covered my crime, to fly. I thought I might, in ſome meaſure, repair the involuntary wrong I had done by ſhewing Caroline who and what the huſband was ſhe fled. I knew her ſoul congenial to yours, capable of eſtimating its worth, and that you were formed to admire and adore each other."

"It was thy noble friendſhip," exclaimed the Count, "which alone could draw me with ſuch features and ſuch colours as could affect the heart of Caroline. Yes, dear Lindorf, to thee alone I owe that heart and all the exquiſite felicity I enjoy. No, had it not been for that paſſion with which thou ſo continually reproacheſt thyſelf, Caroline, perhaps, never had loved me. But go on, dear friend, I long to be convinced thou art equally happy, and that thou thinkeſt Matilda a proper recompenſe for the ſublime efforts thou haſt made to conquer a paſſion which could dictate the manuſcript thou lefteſt at Rindaw and baniſh thee from Caroline."

"I left her," replied Lindorf, "determined never to ſee her more, till, by wholly ſubduing my fatal paſſion, I were worthy her and you; and far was I from foreſeeing this bliſsful moment was ſo near.

near. The ſolitude of Ronebourg augmented my love and gloomy melancholy; inceſſantly did fancy tranſport me to the pavilion of Rindaw, inceſſantly was Caroline preſent. I ſaw her, heard her, converſed with her, and when the ſweet illuſion vaniſhed, deſpair and remorſe acquired additional ſtrength, and they were tried to the utmoſt by your arrival and converſation. You loved Caroline, your happineſs depended on being beloved by her, and again I renewed my vow of ſurmounting my paſſion; or, rather, of forſaking my country, and carefully concealing from you I had been your rival. This vow had been held ſacred; never had the name of Caroline eſcaped my lips had not ſhe, like an apparition, appeared at Ronebourg, the occaſion of which I yet underſtand not, and deprived me of reaſon. Excuſe me from deſcribing all I felt while I thought I beheld her dying, but imagine what it muſt be when it could make me betray the ſecret of my heart, and inform you that a friend, towards whom you had acted with ſuch magnanimity, was the guilty lover of your wife!

"My determination was to take vengeance on myſelf, and follow her whom I thought

thought dead; but ſigns of returning life prevented me: ſhe was reſtored to you, and I wiſhed not to interrupt your happineſs by the horrid ſpectacle of ſuicide. I went into my room, wrote the letter you found, mounted my horſe, and rode full ſpeed, without knowing whither I went, or taking ſo much as a ſingle ſervant with me. The firſt day I ſuffered my horſe to take which road he pleaſed, and, at night, ſtopped at a wretched inn; I endeavoured, however, to collect my ideas, and reſolved to follow my firſt intention, which was to go to England. I had written to court and obtained permiſſion for that purpoſe, my ſervant and baggage might ſoon follow, and I immediately took the road to Hamburg where I meant to embark. I rode poſt day and night, and this continual change of ſcene correſponded with the agitation of my ſoul to which repoſe was inſupportable. I wiſhed to find a veſſel ready to ſail to Hamburg, and to ſtep into it as I got out of my chaiſe; but, happily, there were none ready. Some hours after my arrival, I was ſeized with a burning fever, which laſted ſeveral days; the phyſician, whom my hoſt called in, had me bled ſo abundantly that exceſſive

weakneſs was the conſequence, and retarded my departure. Obliged to remain at Hamburg till I gathered ſtrength, I wrote to my valet de chambre to come to me there. My ſickneſs was the natural conſequence of my feelings, and the fatigues of my journey, and was certainly a fortunate one. It calmed the violence of my tranſports, and obliged me to follow the plan I myſelf had laid down, as ſoon as I knew you to be the huſband of Caroline.

"At preſent, when I no longer feel this weakneſs, I may own that more than twenty times on the road was I tempted to return to Ronebourg, and from your hand demand Caroline or death. Had I been obliged to remain at Hamburg without falling ill, perhaps, I ſhould have been overcome, and for ever have rendered myſelf unworthy your eſteem and friendſhip. My fever, and its conſequent weakneſs, ſhewed me objects under a different point of view; and, whether the organization of the body influences the mind, whether it was the reſult of reflections inceſſantly made, or whether friendſhip really triumphed over love, certain it is my paſſion, each day, became feebler; or, rather, reaſon became ſtronger. I ſtill adored Caroline,

ſine, but I adored her as a deity, without daring to ſuppoſe I again might ſee her. I ſhuddered even at the idea, and, far from wiſhing to return, I wiſhed to remove farther off, and therefore waited impatiently for Varner.

"Such was the temper of my mind when the young Baron de Manteul arrived at Hamburg, and came to lodge in the ſame hotel: my hoſt immediately informed him of my illneſs, exaggerated the danger I had been in, the care he had taken of me, the ſlow recovery of my ſtrength, and inſpired him with a wiſh to become acquainted with me. He ſent up his compliments, and, as his was a Saxon family well known, I received him with pleaſure. His appearance gave me a favourable impreſſion, which was confirmed by his converſation. He was equally pleaſed with me, and in a few hours we were old friends. He, likewiſe, was going to England, but could not ſtop more than three days at Hamburg: hearing I intended to croſs the ſea, he earneſtly entreated me to embark on board the ſame ſhip. My health, which daily grew ſtronger, permitted me to depart, and I willingly conſented to a requeſt by which I ſhould gain ſuch an agreeable

companion. I left a letter of inſtructions for my valet with the hoſt, and in two days we left Hamburg, mutually congratulating each other on this lucky rencontre: we further agreed to live together, at London, and take lodgings in the ſame houſe.

"This young gentleman was the more agreeable to me for being almoſt as melancholy as myſelf, and we often ſighed in ſympathy: he firſt made the remark. During the voyage we were alone on the deck, each abſorbed in his own ideas, and each preſerving the moſt profound ſilence. Manteul at length ſpoke; "I think," ſaid he, "I have diſcovered another conformity between us. Is it not true, dear Lindorf, that your heart is engaged, and that you deeply regret ſome perſon whom you have left in your own country?" I not chooſing to give a direct anſwer, retorted the queſtion on himſelf, and told him he had made the confeſſion.

"I own it," replied he; "and, did you know the perſon I regret, you, then, would have ſome knowledge of what my feelings are. When I quitted Saxony, I imagined I fled from the danger of loving the moſt charming woman in the world; but, now I ſee

I ſee her no more, I feel the miſchief is done, and that I fled too late."

"I owned my heart was as much enſlaved as his, but added nothing farther; I rather endeavoured to turn the converſation, by making reflections on the pangs and effects of love.

"We had a good voyage, and arrived ſafe at London. The novelty of this vaſt city, its riches, the multitude of its inhabitants, and that peculiarity of manners which diſtance and a government ſo different produce, greatly relieved my melancholy; and, as I moſt ſincerely deſired to be wholly cured of it, I myſelf ardently ſought amuſement. I recovered health and ſtrength apace, and even a part of my natural cheerfulneſs, yet did Caroline occupy my heart and thoughts, and, whenever I was alone, I found they turned wholly on her; but, as I dreaded the dangerous recollection, I took every poſſible means to remove it, and remained alone as ſeldom as poſſible. Manteul ſeldom left me; he found, each day, his attachment increaſe, and ſeemed to fear we ſhould part too ſoon. He told me he had received letters from Dreſden, which had lain at his banker's, waiting his arrival at London, that gave him vaſt plea-

ſure. "My return," ſaid he, "may be much ſooner than I ſuppoſed; but the event that will then call me back will be ſo happy a one I ſhall only have my friend to regret." I could eaſily perceive he wiſhed to open his heart to me, but that would have required a reciprocal confidence, and I was determined never to reveal my criminal ſecret, nor ever once to pronounce the name of Caroline; I, therefore, forbore to aſk him who the object of his attachment might be, or to put any one queſtion which might lead him to ſpeak.

"We had been preſented, by our ambaſſador at London, to ſeveral Engliſh noblemen; and, among others, we one day dined with the Earl of Saliſbury. After dinner the toaſt went round, as you know, Walſtein, is the cuſtom in England, and the health of the favourite lady given by each gueſt. When the toaſt came to me, my heart named Caroline, and the word roſe to my lips. I forbore, however, and begged they would excuſe my naming the lady whoſe health I drank. They joked me on my great diſcretion, and drank to the health of the fair incognita.

"I ſhall not be ſo diſcreet as Lindorf," ſaid Manteul, when it came to his turn; "I am

"I am proud to drink the health of Matilda, Counteſs of Walſtein."

"The name ſtruck me ſo forcibly that I ſcarcely could believe what I heard real; but it was repeated round the table ſo often that I could no longer doubt it was that ſame Matilda by whom I had been ſo tenderly beloved, and whom I had ſo cruelly offended. It is impoſſible I ſhould paint the agitation I was in; though, but a moment before, I ſhould not have ſuppoſed any human power could have pronounced a name, except Caroline, that might have made an equal impreſſion. Manteul ſat too far off for me to aſk whether it was Matilda whom he loved; yet, how might I doubt when I beheld his animated countenance, as he repeated, himſelf, and heard others repeat, her name? I looked and thought him handſomer than uſual; he ſeemed to poſſeſs all the qualities of a lover, and, certainly, ſaid I, he is beloved. The letters which gave him ſo much pleaſure are, certainly, from Matilda, and his quick return to Dreſden, which is to render him ſo happy, is, alſo, as certainly, the conſequence of her command; he is then to receive her hand whoſe heart he already poſſeſſes!

"These ideas ran in my mind all the afternoon, and accompanied me to the play, whither I was dragged in spite of myself. I wished immediately to have conversed with Manteul, to have learned his secret; reproached myself for having missed the opportunity, and feared lest it might not return; at last, my thoughts were so disturbed that, finding myself uneasy in the play-house, where I neither heard nor saw, I determined to quit it and come home. I there waited the arrival of Manteul with an impatience wholly unaccountable to myself. It was not long before he came; my going had alarmed him, and scarcely did I give him time to tell me so, before I asked if the lady whose health he had drunk were the lady he loved, and if she were sister to the Count of Walstein, Ambassador in Russia."

"Ay, certainly," replied he, with transport; "she, she herself, your charming countrywoman! Are you acquainted with her? It is some time since she left Berlin."

"I know her brother," replied I, eluding his question. "The Count of Walstein has been to me more than a friend; a father, a saviour, the man in the world most dear to my heart."

"Ah!

"Ah! dear Lindorf," ſaid Manteul, embracing me with rapture, "if you are upon theſe terms with the Count of Walſtein, I may owe all my future bliſs to your friendſhip. She has often proteſted that her brother, alone, had a right to diſpoſe of her hand; and to him you may ſpeak for me; you may engage him to favour my paſſion.——Say, will you, Lindorf, will you?"

"Doubt it not, my friend. Should Matilda, alſo, find this union that which her heart deſires, I then will uſe all the power of my friendſhip with the Count to engage him in your intereſt. But I thought Matilda, in ſome meaſure, contracted to the Baron de Zaſtrow."

"Alas! it was that projected marriage which alone determined me to leave Dreſden. I was the friend of de Zaſtrow, and would not become his rival. I, then, was ignorant how much Matilda diſliked him; but the letter from my ſiſter, which I found waiting my arrival here, informed me of it, and has given me the moſt flattering hopes."

"And had you none before you received that letter?"

"None, none. Matilda never teſtified

any thing more than eſteem for me, and that friendſhip which I thought the conſequence of her intimacy with my ſiſter; ſhe did not ſeem even to perceive how much I preferred her to every other woman. Before I left her I myſelf knew not the ſtrength of my own paſſion; but my ſiſter's letter, by making happineſs poſſible, has made me feel how much I adore that lovely lady."

"I moſt ardently wiſhed to get a ſight of this letter he mentioned, and my wiſh was gratified; he gave it me to read.—"Here, take it, my friend," ſaid he, "and ſee if I have not ſome reaſon to flatter myſelf I am beloved."—I accordingly took it and, with great emotion, began to read.

"Mademoiſelle de Manteul blamed her "brother for departing, not following her "advice, and openly paying his addreſſes "to the young Counteſs. The Baron de "Zaſtrow had no right to be affronted; "he was hated, and the marriage would "never take place. Every thing, on the "contrary, proved to her that her brother "was beloved; ſhe had remarked it before "he left Dreſden, and ſhe now had not "any doubt. Matilda was very ſorry "when ſhe heard he was gone, ſhe had

"even

" even ſhed tears; her former cheerfulneſs
" had forſaken her, and what convinces
" me, ſaid ſhe, your abſence cauſes her me-
" lancholy, is, that it redoubles whenever
" England is mentioned. She yeſterday
" ſaid, in a pet which made her look more
" lovely, 'I wonder why the men are all
" ſo eager to run to that good for nothing
" England!' This, brother, I ſhould think
" a tolerably favourable ſymptom, and, if
" you want a ſtill ſtronger, I muſt tell you
" ſhe herſelf has begged me to ſhow her
" your letters. Profit by this information.
" You have ſtill time enough to repair the
" folly you have committed in leaving
" Dreſden. Write me a letter, immedi-
" ately; not by way of anſwer to this,
" but ſeem to conſide the ſecret of your
" paſſion for my young friend to me; en-
" treat me to ſound her thoughts; ſay fear
" alone occaſioned you to go, but that the
" leaſt ray of hope will bring you back;
" ſhe will read the letter in my preſence;
" I ſhall ſee what impreſſion it makes,
" and I dare believe the ſecret of her
" heart will not eſcape my penetration.
" I hope ſoon to give you more certain
" information which ſhall haſten your re-
" turn."

"This letter ſeemed to me a clear proof that Matilda loved young Manteul, and I felt a painful ſenſation, a ſpaſm of the heart, which I could not account for, and which I endeavoured to conceal. I returned the letter, and confirmed his hopes.—"I have written to my ſiſter," ſaid he, "exactly as ſhe preſcribed, and I impatiently wait her anſwer: if, as ſhe thinks, it ſhould be favourable, and if Matilda will permit me to aſpire to the honour and happineſs of making her mine, you, dear Lindorf, may be ſerviceable to my intereſts with the Count, her brother. I may owe my felicity to you, and my friendſhip for you will thus be increaſed."

"This I ſolemnly promiſed, but not without a ſenſation that ſeemed very like jealouſy, which the deſcription he gave of the lovely Matilda augmented. I could not deny I had often ſeen her before ſhe left Berlin, and he added, "You would not know her, Lindorf; no, you would not know her. You cannot imagine how much ſhe is altered, how much improved. I know not whether it be poſſible to find a more beautiful woman; but a more graceful, a more charming one the world does not contain: ſhe has every thing that can

ſeduce

ſeduce and awe the heart. Her features have not a tame regularity; no, each has an expreſſion peculiar to itſelf; her countenance is continually varying, and is the mirror of a moſt excellent heart, and a moſt amiable mind. Never long the ſame, ſhe is playful, ſportive, forward, cheerful, pretending to take pet, and laughing at the deception ſhe has occaſioned. She inſpires joy and pleaſure in all around her. At other times, mild, fond, and full of ſenſibility, ſhe would melt the coldeſt or the hardeſt heart. Such I beheld her, every day; and how might I reſiſt ſo many allurements; or what ſhall be my happineſs ſhould ſhe become mine?"

"My ſecret regret for having wilfully caſt this happineſs from me was the anſwer my heart returned to Manteul. And had I!——had I been beloved by this charming lady! And did it once depend only on me to have made her for ever mine! Oh! how little had I merited a gift the value of which too late I knew! What! had ſhe not a right to forget the man who repaid her affection with the blackeſt ingratitude; neglected, abandoned her, and, on the very firſt occaſion, yielding wholly to the love of another, repelled the heart which fondly had

had beſtowed itſelf on him, and obliged it to ſeek a mate more worthy?——Theſe ideas rapidly ſucceeded each other in my mind, and gave me an abſent and gloomy air, at which Manteul might well have been ſurpriſed; but he was too much intereſted in the ſubject of the converſation to perceive it; was too deſirous of continuing to ſpeak of his dear Matilda, and his future hopes. It was not poſſible, however, for me to hear him unmoved; I, therefore, pretended I was not very well, and withdrew.

"No ſooner was I alone than I began to inquire what my ſenſations were, and how I might feel this ſtrange emotion concerning an event which I ought to have foreſeen. Since I had not loved Matilda, ſince I had renounced her heart and hand, what were my rights? Ought I not to be happy that another had been more juſt, and made reparation for my wrongs? Alas! ſo far was I from being happy, from thinking thus, that it ſeemed as if Manteul bore away a treaſure which appertained to me alone; nay I was inconſiſtent, unjuſt, enough to accuſe Matilda of want of conſtancy, guilty as I myſelf had been! I recollected every circumſtance of our acquaintance,

quaintance, thoſe tender promiſes, ſo ingenuous, ſo often repeated in her letters, to love me, and me only, and exclaimed, All women are inconſtant; as if I myſelf had not been an example that men have, at leaſt that I had, very little reaſon for theſe reproaches!

"I next reflected on the ſituation in which I ſtood with Manteul, and that folly which, a ſecond time, had made me the rival of a friend. Yet durſt I not allow myſelf to ſay I was his rival, but promiſed, if he were beloved, as every thing gave me reaſon to ſuppoſe, I would ſerve him with all the ardor of friendſhip: this I preſently aſſured him of, and we waited, with equal impatience, the anſwer of his ſiſter, which was to contain his ſentence."

"Well, but Caroline? Is ſhe wholly forgotten; already effaced from that heart where ſhe had reigned with ſuch unbounded ſway?"

"From my own experience, Walſtein, I am convinced the heart, when it abſolutely loſes hope, loſes, in part, its pain; not, perhaps, in every inſtance, but in moſt; and, where love is the paſſion, whenever a new object is found, that, by any concurrence of circumſtances, becomes intereſting,

intereſting, the former is preſently forgotten; at leaſt, ſo far forgotten as not to be remembered with the ſame reſtleſs and tormenting ſenſations. I thought of Caroline, Counteſs of Walſtein, but not of Caroline of Lichtfield, and was moſt happy to encourage the mutability; my imagination no longer wandered in the gardens of Rindaw, or dwelt in the pavilion, but ſaw Caroline at Berlin, there in company with the beſt of huſbands, and enjoying her felicity. Happy was I when thus I might remember her without remorſe, and, whenever her name roſe to memory, the name of my friend was, alſo, preſent; while that of Matilda, which Manteul was inceſſantly repeating, gave me an emotion, the origin of which I, who had had ſo much experience, could not miſtake. Thus, my friend, you ſee my cure is far advanced; and you ſoon will learn in what manner I was perfectly reſtored.

"On our firſt arrival in England, we deſigned to have travelled through the different counties; but, ſuppoſing we ſhould remain there all winter, intended to have deferred our journey till the ſpring. Manteul, determined to depart immediately, ſhould his ſiſter's letter recall him to Dreſ-

den,

den, entreated me now to go with him and, at leaſt, viſit the moſt famous places. Since I had learned his ſecret I was ill at eaſe, and little inclined to reſt long in one place. A journey, I imagined, would be ſome relief, and I willingly conſented. We ſet off, therefore, paſſed through various counties, and a part of Wales, ſtopping to examine what was held muſt curious and intereſting. This, dear Count, is not the moment to give you a deſcription of a country where peace and liberty produce abundance, where the productive fields, cultivated by wealthy farmers, are not, like ours, the ſcenes of bloody battles, and all their direful attendants. Certain of finding them nouriſhment, the inhabitants fear not to marry and beget children. The towns, villages, and cities, are extremely populous, and every perſon ſeems happy; and, as the Engliſh nobility paſs one part of the year at their country ſeats, where they contribute to the proſperity of their tenants, thoſe beautiful country ſeats are built with an elegance, and preſerved in a ſtyle of grandeur and taſte, very different from the gloomy magnificence of our antique chateaus. If we wiſh to form an idea of the beauties of nature, and the in-

expreſſible

expreſſible charms of a country life, we muſt go to England."

"You augment the wiſh I have to ſee that country," ſaid the Count; "I intend to take my dear Caroline thither; but, till that happens, ſhall be glad of farther information."

"I know not whether I am capable of affording you any," replied Lindorf, "for we travelled with too much rapidity, and our hearts and minds were too much preoccupied, to remark the numerous things deſerving notice. I have only juſt mentioned what muſt neceſſarily ſtrike every foreigner who beholds England for the firſt time.

"Impatience to receive news from Dreſden made us ſoon turn our faces towards London: I certainly was more uneaſy than Manteul. The hope he had conceived contributed much to his happineſs, which I rather envied than participated; and the more cheerful and animated I ſaw him, the more did my ſecret chagrin and gloom increaſe. I ſpoke to him, however, continually, concerning Matilda, led him to repeat the moſt minute circumſtances, and was as inexhauſtible in my queſtions as Manteul was in replies. This was our

chief

chief ſubject of converſation, and, every moment, grief, regret, jealouſy, and I may add love, acquired new force. Manteul found no letters when we came to London; but, two days after our arrival, as I was riſing, intending to breakfaſt with him, his ſervant brought me a letter, with my addreſs. Surpriſed at this, I immediately was going to him, but was informed he was gone out, and would not be at home before dinner. My aſtoniſhment increaſed, and I opened the letter, not without emotion, which ſtill became more forcible when I ſaw the cover incloſed a letter that had been opened, addreſſed to Manteul, with the poſt-mark of Dreſden, which, by its ſize, ſeemed ſtill to contain another. This I ſuppoſed to be the anſwer of his ſiſter, and a letter incloſed from Matilda. But wherefore not bring them himſelf? In ſpite of my impatience to ſee it, I began by reading the few lines Manteul had written in the cover. "Here it is," ſaid Lindorf, taking it from his pocket-book, "and imagine what was my ſurpriſe:

"I know not whether to the beſt of "friends or moſt traitorous of men I in-"cloſe the letters I have juſt received;

"while

" while I thus abſolutely cede to the for-
" mer opinion, I ſhall prove I wiſh to find
" I am not miſtaken, however appearances
" may ſay the contrary.—And is Lindorf
" then the lover of Matilda? By her be-
" loved? The huſband of her choice, ſe-
" lected by her brother, and acknowledged
" by her heart? The man to whom ſhe
" would inſtantly ſacrifice the homage of
" the adoring world; and is it from her-
" ſelf I learn all this?—Oh! Lindorf,
" what motive can you have had for the
" inconceivable myſteriouſneſs of your
" conduct? I cannot think you capable of
" baſe treachery; yet I had ſome right to
" your confidence and ſincerity.—I am
" loſt in doubt, and own I fear the conſe-
" quences of meeting you at this moment.
" Send your anſwer to the Orange Coffee-
" houſe: there can be no reaſon for longer
" diſſimulation, for, ſince you are beloved,
" you no longer have a rival.

" Manteul."

" It is impoſſible to tell you what I felt. Was I—Was I ſtill beloved by the charming, the conſtant Matilda? Was it for me, ungrateful as I was, that ſhe refuſed the addreſſes of de Zaſtrow, of Manteul, nay of

of *the w'o'e world!* I opened the letter and found one addreſſed to me; the hand was well known, and an emotion, almoſt involuntary, brought it to my lips. I was about to open and enjoy the exceſs of my happineſs when a ſudden and bitter reflection ſtopped me. Again at the expence of a friend muſt I be happy; and this friend had reaſon to ſuppoſe me perfidious. I could not endure the thought. You, dear Count, are capable of imagining what my feelings were, and the increaſe they ſuffered by recollection. This was the ſecond time love had aſſaulted friendſhip, and a ſecond time was I deſirous friendſhip ſhould be victorious. I would not read the letters till I firſt had juſtified myſelf to Manteul, and till I had his free conſent to read them: I locked them up, and inſtantly went in ſearch of him to the coffee-houſe, where he had not yet been, and where the moſt probable way of meeting him would have been to wait; but waiting at this moment was impoſſible. I ran to ſeek him elſewhere. I rather choſe ſpeaking to him than writing a letter long enough to have explained all the reaſons of my conduct, which little ſuited my impatience; but, as we might miſs each other in the

ſearch,

ſearch, I left a line at the coffee-houſe, ſaying "he did me juſtice in believing me "incapable of perfidy; that, certainly, I "had many things to reproach myſelf with, "but not that of treachery towards him. "Matilda only had a right to complain. I "begged him to wait at the coffee-houſe, "and pledged myſelf to give him every "explanation he could require, aſſuring "him I ſhould not take a moment's reſt "till he had heard me. I had not read, "nor would read, a line in the letters he "had ſent me, and hoped to prove how "highly I valued his eſteem and friend-"ſhip!"

"After giving this note to the waiter I continued my ſearch, went to the Pruſſian Ambaſſador's, into the Park, to all our acquaintances, but miſſed him every where; and, returning to the coffee-houſe, found, to my great vexation, he had been there and was gone, but that he had left a note for me, which was this. (Lindorf read it to the Count.)

"I wiſh to ſee and ſpeak with you, dear "Lindorf, but it is not poſſible. Lord "Cavendiſh has requeſted me to accom-"pany him to Newmarket, he is ſetting "off immediately, and I ſcarcely have time

"to

" to write a word. You know how deſir-
" ous I am of ſeeing thoſe famous races,
" and I was the more ready to accept the
" offer becauſe my mind is at preſent in
" great need of relief. Your note, and eſ-
" pecially your eagerneſs to ſee me before
" you have read your letters, tell me all that
" at preſent I wiſh to know. Read them,
" dear friend, and if you are not, in half
" an hour, on the road to Dreſden you do
" not merit your happineſs. Could any
" thing diſturb, or alter, my eſteem and
" friendſhip for you, it would be to hear
" you were in London at this time to-mor-
" row. Farewell, dear Lindorf, and be
" as happy as you deſerve; as happy as
" you muſt be with the moſt lovely of
" women. I will ſeek another like her, if
" poſſible, and whoſe heart is free. Should
" the company and ſports of Newmarket
" have the effect I hope, you will ſoon
" hear from me. I doubt not but you will
" write and give me the account you pro-
" miſe, not by way of explanation, it is
" not requiſite, but in the confidence of
" friendſhip, and to one who is infinitely
" intereſted both for Lindorf and Matilda.
" *She*, you ſay, *only has a right to complain*—
Happy

"Happy Lindorf!—Fly, behold her, and "ſhe will not have that right long.

"Manteul."

"Scarcely had I finiſhed before I flew to the houſe of Lord Cavendiſh, hoping ſtill to find him; but they were gone poſt, and I heſitated, for a moment, whether I ſhould or ſhould not follow; but motives ſo ſtrong and a deſire ſo ardent drew me elſewhere that I could not long reſiſt. I once more read the note of Manteul, and finding he avoided me, 'Why,' ſaid I, 'ſhould I force the ſight of a happy rival on him in the firſt paroxyſm of grief?' Was I in reality beloved by the generous Matilda? Manteul, only, yet, had told me ſo, and I longed to ſee the confirmation. I, therefore, returned home, and read the two letters I am going to ſhew you. You will begin by reading that of Mademoiſelle de Manteul, as I did, though moſt impatient to ſee the other, which, addreſſed to me, made my heart palpitate. I trembled to open a paper where each word, traced by the hand of Matilda, muſt be a reproach to this inconſtant heart. She, perhaps, knew not my infidelity; but was I, therefore,

ſore, leſs culpable?—Ah! when I did read, how did her ingenuous and affectionate ſoul, which infuſed itſelf into the paper, augment my wrongs, and make me more ſelf-odious! "I began with this," ſaid Lindorf, giving it to the Count.

"Mademoiſelle de Manteul firſt aſked a "thouſand pardons of her brother for having given him falſe hopes. Deceived herſelf, ſhe had believed the thing ſhe wiſhed "to be was true, and that he had been the "ſecret object of Matilda's love. It was "your letter," added ſhe, "that very "letter I requeſted you to write, and from "which I expected effects ſo very different, that deſtroyed all my hopes. No, "brother, you are not the beloved man. "Matilda has long ſince yielded her heart. "She refuſes the homage of de Zaſtrow, "of you, and of the whole world, for the "ſake of your new friend, that very Baron of Lindorf of whom you ſpeak. She "ſaw but his name in your letter and, inſtantly, her ſecret was betrayed: yet it "can now be no ſecret to you, for, being "thus intimate with that gentleman, he, "by this, has, certainly, made you his "confidant; certainly, has told you he has "long ſince been contracted to the young "Counteſs of Walſtein. Her brother, the

" moſt intimate friend of Lindorf, pro-
" moted this union, and their hearts were
" accordant to his wiſhes. Matilda de-
" clares nothing can break this tie but
" death; for, though Lindorf ſhould even
" prove inconſtant, ſhe never will. Your
" paſſion, therefore, dear brother, for your
" own ſake, you will vanquiſh, and I think
" I know you ſufficiently reaſonable and
" generous to reſt aſſured it will change
" to friendſhip, and that you will take a
" pleaſure at once to ſerve Matilda and her
" lover. This you may do by giving him
" the incloſed letter, which the poor young
" lady had no means of ſending. It is not
" ſhe that requeſts this, but I; thinking
" it the beſt means of effecting your cure.
" Tell this Lindorf that his miſtreſs is per-
" ſecuted by her aunt, who will oblige her
" to wed de Zaſtrow, whom ſhe hates; that
" this will certainly occaſion her death;
" prevail on him to depart inſtantly, that
" he may conſole, deliver, and carry her
" off, if neceſſary; and, indeed, I ſee no
" other means. What can he have to fear,
" ſince he is authorized by her brother?
" You well may ſuppoſe, Charles, I ſhould
" have been happy had you been the man;
" but her heart was beſtowed before ſhe
" ame to Dreſden. Endeavour, therefore,

" only to contribute to her happineſs; and,
" perhaps, to your ſiſter's likewiſe."

" This latter phraſe, which had eſcaped the obſervation of Lindorf, made the Count ſmile, and confirmed him in his former opinion of Mademoiſelle de Manteul. He returned the letter to Lindorf, who then gave him that from Matilda—" Read," ſaid he, " and think what muſt be the impreſſion it made on me!"

" Dreſden———Yes, M. Lindorf, Ma-
" tilda writes to you. Your friend, Ma-
" tilda. She does very wrong, to be ſure;
" ſhe ought not to be the firſt to break this
" excellent ſilence. Oh! yes, yes; I know
" I do wrong; but, I likewiſe know, I can-
" not help it. There are certain moments
" in life when the heart ſpeaks louder than
" reaſon, and compels it to ſilence, and
" my heart ſays ſo many many things that
" I am obliged to liſten and do whatever
" it pleaſes. It tells me, for example, I
" ſhall be leſs unhappy when I have relat-
" ed all my ſufferings to my friend; and I
" already feel it tells me truth. Since I
" have begun to write it ſeems as if my
" griefs were all changed into ſo many
" pleaſures; but, alas! theſe will preſently
" vaniſh; and no ſooner will my letter be
" ended than my torments will re-com-

" mence. My brother ſtill in Ruſſia, Lin-
" dorf ſtill in England, de Zaſtrow ſtill at
" Dreſden, and poor Matilda ſtill perſe-
" cuted.——My aunt requires impoſſibi-
" lities. Have I two hearts that I may
" beſtow one on de Zaſtrow? And if I had
" a thouſand, ſhould not I give them all
" to——to——. Ever ſince I have begun
" to write this letter, nay, ever ſince I firſt
" thought of writing it, have I been in-
" ceſſantly torturing my imagination for
" the beſt manner of telling you what I
" feel, and how I might ſay all I have to
" ſay; but the more I think the leſs I ſuc-
" ceed. It will be impoſſible you ſhould
" underſtand me——I will think no more
" on the matter; I will ſuffer my hand and
" my heart to go their own way. I re-
" quire ſincerity, and have a right to give
" the example——Yes, M. Lindorf (ſee!
" ſee! I am ſtill thinking about the man-
" ner). Well then, dear, dear Lindorf! I
" love you, and ſhall love you as long as I
" live!—And be aſſured, I will live and
" die either Matilda Walſtein, or Matilda
" Lindorf——Do not be terrified at this
" my eternal conſtancy. No, dear Lin-
" dorf, it does not entail itſelf on *you*:
" far am I from ſuppoſing you under the
" ſame obligation. With myſelf only, not

" with you, have I entered into this en-
" gagement. I have heard men may
" change as often as they pleaſe, without
" becoming leſs eſtimable in their own
" eyes, or even in the eyes of the women;
" and it muſt be true, ſince my brother, the
" wiſeſt and the beſt of men, has changed,
" nobody knows why, and ſeems no longer
" to love his poor ſiſter.——Ah! Lindorf,
" dear Lindorf, do you ſupply the place
" of this brother, who forſakes me; he is
" ſo far off I have no means of reclaiming
" his friendſhip; but, certainly, yours,
" Lindorf, will come to my aid. Adviſe,
" tell me, how I may avoid a marriage I
" deteſt; preſerve me for——Alas! if not
" for Lindorf, for myſelf.——If it be true
" he loves another——I aſk no queſtions,
" I ſhall know it ſoon enough; yet it will
" not alter my preſent manner of thinking,
" neither with reſpect to you, the Baron de
" Zaſtrow, nor all the men on earth, for
" never among them all will I chooſe more
" than one. This I know, and what far-
" ther knowledge do I want? Only tell me
" you will remain the friend of Matilda;
" the word *friend* will aſcertain your ſince-
" rity; which will be ſtill farther confirmed
" by your frankneſs, and eagerneſs to an-
" ſwer this, to relieve me from the cruel in-

" quietude your ſilence, that of my bro-
" ther, and the abſence of you both occa-
" ſion; from that neglect which reſembles
" offence, forgetfulneſs, and death, and
" which certainly will be death, if it con-
" tinue much longer, to Matilda Wal-
" ſtein.

" P. S. I know not how to direct this
" letter, nor where to ſend it. Alas! I
" know not whether you or my brother
" neglects me the moſt; but you both are
" ——— What in the world I love the
" beſt! Which, I am afraid, is as much
" as to ſay, ungrateful."

The Count was affected at reading this letter, and ſeverely reprehended himſelf for having ſuffered his paſſion for Caroline to make him ſo far neglect his ſiſter. He ought not to have been ſatisfied with writing a letter; he ſhould have ſuppoſed it might be intercepted, and have gone himſelf. He began to imagine he, only, was in the wrong.——" You may think," ſaid Lindorf, " what I felt from what you yourſelf feel."—The Count was going to give back the letter.———" No, keep it," ſaid Lindorf, " and if I ever ſhould be wretched enough to forget it, or give my Matilda a moment's grief, ſhew me but hat letter and I ſhall inſtantly repair the wrong."

"I did not hesitate a moment, after I had read it," continued he, "concerning how I must act. To fly to her, to console her, to entreat her to forgive the injuries I had done her, to tear her from the arms of tyranny, and dedicate my life to her happiness, was the first wish, the vow, of my heart. I clearly saw they deceived her, since she still supposed you in Russia. They, no doubt, had intercepted your letters; she was beset with snares, and by people devoted to de Zistrow. The danger was so pressing that I determined immediately to depart; the recollection of Manteul only could have prevented me, and this his note counteracted. *Could any thing disturb, or alter, my esteem and friendship for you, it would be to hear you were in London at this time to-morrow.* I determined, however, not to leave England till I had removed every doubt respecting my own conduct, and the mystery I had made of my engagements with Matilda. I, therefore, sat down and wrote a circumstantial account of what my motives and intentions were, in which I concealed nothing but the name of Caroline, and owned that what he had said of Matilda had more than revived my former inclination for her; but that, feeling she had every right to forget me, I was resolved

to make her every reparation I might, by aiding her in this her ſuppoſed new paſſion. My letter was long, and I was ſtill writing when the ſervant, whom Manteul had taken with him, returned. He, on recollection, had ſent him back with another note, which was but a ſort of repetition of the preceding one, fearing leſt it had not come to hand, and that my departure was by that means deferred. He added new and ſtronger motives to haſten me, and, that I might not have the leaſt uneaſineſs on his account, aſſured me, "he looked "on it as a lucky event; too young, at "preſent, to marry (he is not twenty) no "woman but Matilda could have excuſed "his entering into the marriage ſtate. The "ſuſpicion of being beloved by her had "led him wild, but the conviction of the "contrary had reſtored him to reaſon and "liberty. By theſe he would profit, would "ſtudy, and travel for ſome years, and "hoped, when we met again, to find me "the happy huſband of the moſt lovely of "women. Whatever my motives might "have been for forſaking her, he was certain I no longer ſhould be inconſtant the "moment I ſaw her. He knew me too "well to believe I ſhould not immediately "fly to her aſſiſtance, though it were but

"from

" from motives of friendſhip, and if I even " was incapable of love. He concluded " by telling me his ſervant had orders to " return to him as ſoon as he had ſeen me " get into the poſt-chaiſe."

" I ſent back the voluminous letter I had written, and his ſervant departed for Newmarket, at the ſame time that I left London. The wind was favourable, and we had a quick paſſage. I found Varner at Hamburg, where he had been ſeveral weeks, detained by contrary winds, and at which he had been much afflicted. He gave me your ſhort note, and my banker, the ſame day, delivered the ſucceeding letter; both were equally preſſing, both requeſted my immediate return, without explaining your motives. Of this there was no need; the requeſt of Walſtein need not fear diſobedience, and, had I not been returning, I inſtantly ſhould have ſet out. Yet how muſt I confeſs that my heart made me take the road to Dreſden inſtead of that to Berlin! I have no excuſe unleſs it were a *preſentiment*. I endeavoured to perſuade myſelf that a few days delay could not give you any pain, though it might be of the utmoſt conſequence to Matilda. I was anxious to ſee her, to perſuade her to come with me, and bring her to her brother.

Nay,

Nay, I even interpreted your two ſo preſſing letters into poſitive orders that related ſolely to Matilda, and concluded I beſt was anſwering your intentions by flying to her aid before I ſaw you. I therefore ſtopped at Hamburg only till good horſes and equipage could be found. The reſt you know; my rencontre with de Zaſtrow, and my ſurpriſe at ſeeing Matilda leap out of the poſt-chaiſe: though I have not yet ventured to tell you, before her, how much the alteration in her perſon affected, aſtoniſhed, and enchanted me; how ſuperior ſhe was to the Matilda I had formerly known, to her Manteul had deſcribed, or, even, to what my imagination had ſuppoſed. Oh! Walſtein, how beauteous! how angelic did ſhe ſeem, embelliſhed as her countenance was by the emotions of her heart! The firſt words ſhe uttered had ſomething of tenderneſs, of feeling, of ſoul, which it is impoſſible to convey. I ſee her now fly from the carriage, run with open arms, and hear her utter, Lindorf, dear Lindorf, they want to ſteal your Matilda from you, who is, and only will be, yours!

"Her native innocence is above all ſuſpicion; ſhe loves, herſelf, and thinks it moſt certain ſhe is, herſelf, beloved. Not a year's ſilence, not all that others have

ſaid,

ſaid, nor all that I have done, could ſhake her conſtancy. The moment ſhe ſees me they are all forgotten, and not a ſhadow of doubt remains. Ah! when fainting and feeble ſhe ſunk into my arms, pale, inanimate, and with half cloſed eyes, how intereſting was it to my ſoul! With what ardor did I ſwear to live with her, and her alone! On her lips, as I bore her into the houſe, I pronounced the vow which I never can forget, no more than I can the rapturous ſenſations I that moment experienced.

"My affair with de Zaſtrow, my wound, the tender care ſhe has taken of me, her underſtanding, her grace, her ingenuous mind, all have augmented my paſſion. Yet will I own I felt ſome emotion at the ſight of Caroline; but it was of a very different kind from what I had formerly known. I ſaw with pleaſure, yes, Walſtein, with infinite pleaſure, you were beloved, and Caroline was to me as a ſiſter, the wife of my friend and brother. And now, dear Count, you know my inmoſt heart, and, I hope, will not delay to beſtow the happineſs I ſo ardently deſire, which preſent conviction tells me I deſerve, and which will make felicity perfect."

"My felicity," replied the Count, tenderly

derly embracing him, "will not be perfect till I behold Matilda and Lindorf as happy as I myſelf am; nor ſhall it be long before theſe new bonds of affinity and friendſhip ſhall be formed, which will leave me nothing farther to wiſh."

Walſtein then related all his paſt ſcenes with Caroline. Lindorf ſhuddered at the idea of the divorce. "Good God!" ſaid he, "could you ſuppoſe I would be acceſſary to ſuch a ſacrifice! That I would be happy at the expence of Walſtein!"

"It was the happineſs of Caroline that was in conteſt, and neither you nor I, Lindorf, ought then to recede. The letters I wrote, and which thou wouldeſt have found on thy arrival, would have removed every ſcruple: friendſhip and delicacy muſt have yielded to motives more deciſive. My reaſons were good, and my meaſures well taken, and thou couldeſt not but have acted accordingly."

"Aſk me not how I ſhould have acted," replied Lindorf; "I, fortunately, have not been put to the proof. I am proud of being your brother. You only could deſerve Caroline, and ſhe alone could equal your virtues. Matilda, perhaps, is, by temper and nature, better ſuited to your friend Lindorf."

"She

"She does not know," ſaid the Count, "that Caroline has been her rival?" "She knows every thing," replied Lindorf, with vivacity. "She has a right to know every thing. My heart were unworthy of her had I any ſecrets. In juſtice, I was obliged to account for my coolneſs, my ſilence, my voyage to England. Might I deceive her? No, impoſſible; and had I even ſo intended, no ſuch intention could have been kept. Her noble frankneſs, her open candor, would irreſiſtibly have enſured like confidence and like ſincerity. No ſooner were we alone in the poſt-chaiſe than ſhe ſpoke of you and your marriage; and aſked if I knew her ſiſter. A full confeſſion of all that had paſſed was my anſwer; and, far from feeling jealouſy or vexation, I found, as I ſpoke, ſhe became attached to Caroline, was deſirous of her friendſhip, and determined to imitate her beſt qualities and virtues." "Oh! how dearly," ſaid ſhe, "ſhall I love this charming Caroline! How happy will ſhe make my brother! And how gladly ſhall I learn, from her, to reclaim and fix my rover, my Lindorf!" —Since Matilda has ſeen her, ſhe has told me, with a tone of ſincerity that leaves no doubt on the mind, Ah! Lindorf, how perfectly are you juſtified in your paſſion!

I never

I never could have pardoned you had you ſeen Caroline with indifference!" Such, dear Count, is your ſiſter; and judge whether I ought not to adore her."

Arrived at Berlin, the firſt care of the Count was to preſent his friend and ſiſter to the King, and requeſt his approbation of their marriage; which obtained, the happy family went to the Walſtein eſtate, where Caroline had fled *from* her huſband, on the bridal day, and *to* him on the morning of the projected divorce, and of which Juſtin was ſteward. There, in the Count's chapel, was the marriage celebrated, without other witneſſes than Walſtein, Caroline, the tenants of the Chateau, and ſome of the villagers. As they left the church, Louiſa came to pay her reſpects to Lindorf, to whom ſhe was preſented by Caroline. He beheld both thoſe lovely women, who formerly had raiſed ſuch commotions in his breaſt, with perfect tranquillity; and, preſſing the hand of the Count who ſtood next him, "I feel, at this moment," ſaid he, "I am worthy to be the brother of Walſtein. I was diſtracted for Louiſa, Caroline I adored, but Matilda I love, and ſhall for ever love!"

The

THE CONCLUSION.

TO thoſe who wiſh to be informed of every thing that paſſes we ſhall further ſay, that Lindorf continued thus to think; that he made his lovely lady happy, attained to the higheſt rank in the army, and diſtinguiſhed himſelf on ſeveral occaſions. That Edmund, Count of Walſtein, was a pillar to the throne, a friend of the King, a protector of the people, a ſupporter of the wretched, and that he found, in the conſtant affection of his dear Caroline, and the good conduct of his children, the full recompenſe of his virtues; while Caroline, the adored, the beloved Caroline, meeting the admiration ſhe merited, was the happieſt as ſhe was the moſt angelic of women.

We ſhall likewiſe add that the young Baron de Zaſtrow, admiring his Pariſian graces, engrafted on a German trunk, finding he pleaſed only Mademoiſelle de Manteul, who pleaſed not him, returned to Paris and his gaming friends, purſued his theatrical conqueſts, and made ſuch good uſe of his time, money, and conſtitution that, in leſs than a year, he was ruined,

ined, diſeaſed and dead. His aunt, perceiving Matilda had had good reaſon for her refuſal, pardoned, and left her all her wealth.

Mademoiſelle de Manteul retired, at firſt, into a convent; after which ſhe obtained the place of a lady of honour, at court; where, exerciſing that ſpirit of intrigue with which ſhe was ſo liberally endowed, ſhe became perfectly competent to her poſt.

Her young brother, the well diſpoſed and amiable Manteul, for whom we have been intereſted, and whom we ſaw ſet off to Newmarket, met with Lady Sophia Seymour, who was couſin german to the Count and Matilda, and who greatly reſembled the latter. Manteul now found he was far from having ſuffered a loſs, inaſmuch as Lady Sophia, no-wiſe inferior to her lovely couſin, loved him with all the ardour with which Matilda loved Lindorf. The Count, in a voyage he made to London, in company with Caroline, had the pleaſure of forming this union, and making two more lovers happy.

THE END.